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"Offers a satisfying mix of teamwork, action and humor." – AIPT

X-MEN

HOSTILE TAKEOVER

JED MacKAY NETHO DIAZ RYAN STEGMAN EMILIO LAISO

“Showcases Jed MacKay’s ability to craft compelling character-driven stories.”
– THE COMIC BOOK DISPATCH

I CAME TO WARN YOU, SON.
THEY'RE AFTER YOU.

ALPHA FLIGHT FLIES BACK INTO ACTION!

A DEADLY CADRE OF WARRIORS PURSUE THEIR TARGET TO EARTH — a target making a beeline to the X-Men’s home territory of Alaska! As a horde of the galaxy’s most fearsome killers descend upon the X-Men, help comes from an unexpected direction: across the border! But can even Alpha Flight, Canada’s hardiest heroes, turn the tide? The X-Men have caught up with Charles Xavier on his mad scramble across the country, but they aren’t the only ones who’ve found him! A simple search-and-rescue mission escalates out of control — placing not just the X-Men, but also the entire town of Merle in danger! And as 3K steps out from the shadows for the first time to further their twisted program, will the Means — their anointed headsman — slake his bloodthirst on our mutant heroes? Plus: Meet the all-new, all-different X-Men—staking their own claim for possession of mutantkind’s future!

COLLECTING *X-MEN (2024) #11-18*—
BY JED MacKAY, NETHO DIAZ,
RYAN STEGMAN, C.F. VILLA,
EMILIO LAISO, SEAN PARSONS,
LIVESAY, JP MAYER,
FER SIFUENTES-SUJO
AND MARTE GRACIA.

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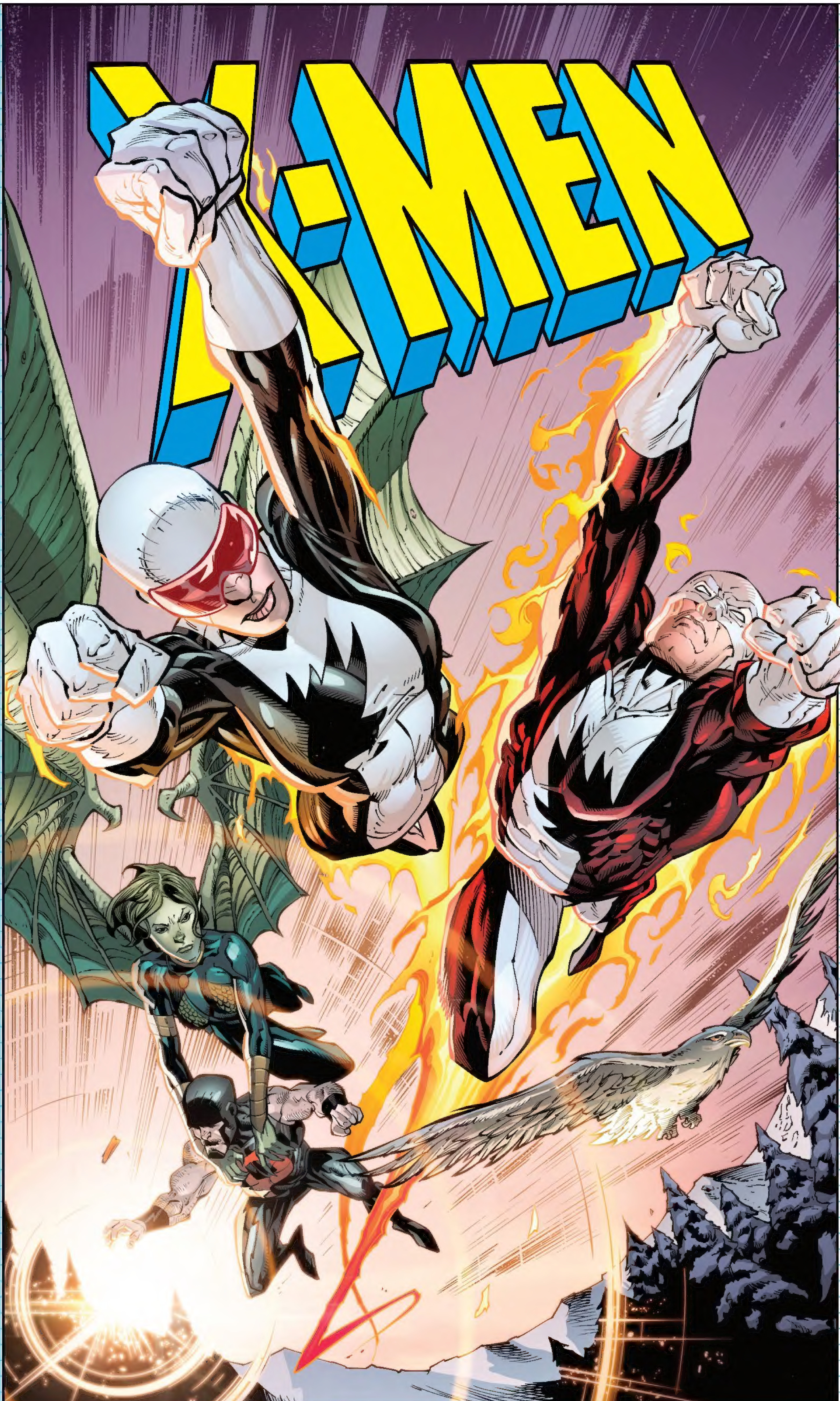

HOSTILE TAKEOVER

THE X-MEN HAVE TAKEN IN SEVERAL MUTANT CIVILIANS whose mutations were forcibly activated late into adulthood by the mysterious organization 3K. The X-Men also caught the unwanted attention of Agent Lundqvist of O*N*E, the Office of National Emergency. O*N*E's forces came to the Factory, the X-Men's headquarters, to arrest the team due to their involvement in a recent raid on Graymalkin Prison. But Cyclops was able to fend them off with a series of coordinated attacks on O*N*E bases that showcased the mutants' might.

BORN WITH INCREDIBLE SUPERHUMAN ABILITIES, MUTANTS HAVE LONG BEEN PERSECUTED FOR THEIR DIFFERENCES. THE MUTANT HEROES KNOWN AS THE X-MEN WERE TRAINED BY PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER TO USE THEIR POWERS TO PROTECT THE WORLD THAT HATES AND FEARS THEM AND TO BRIDGE THE GROWING DIVIDE BETWEEN HUMANITY AND MUTANTKIND.

X-MEN

HOSTILE TAKEOVER

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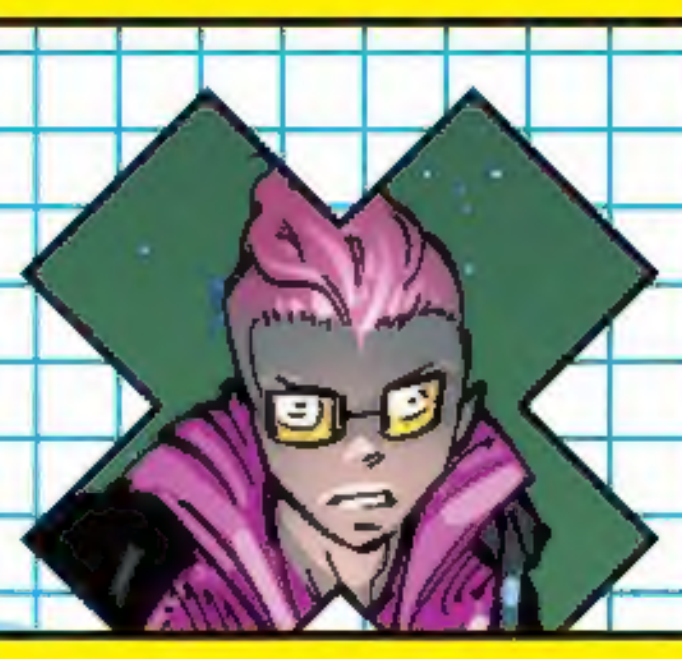
KID OMEGA

TEMPER

MAGIK

JUGGERNAUT

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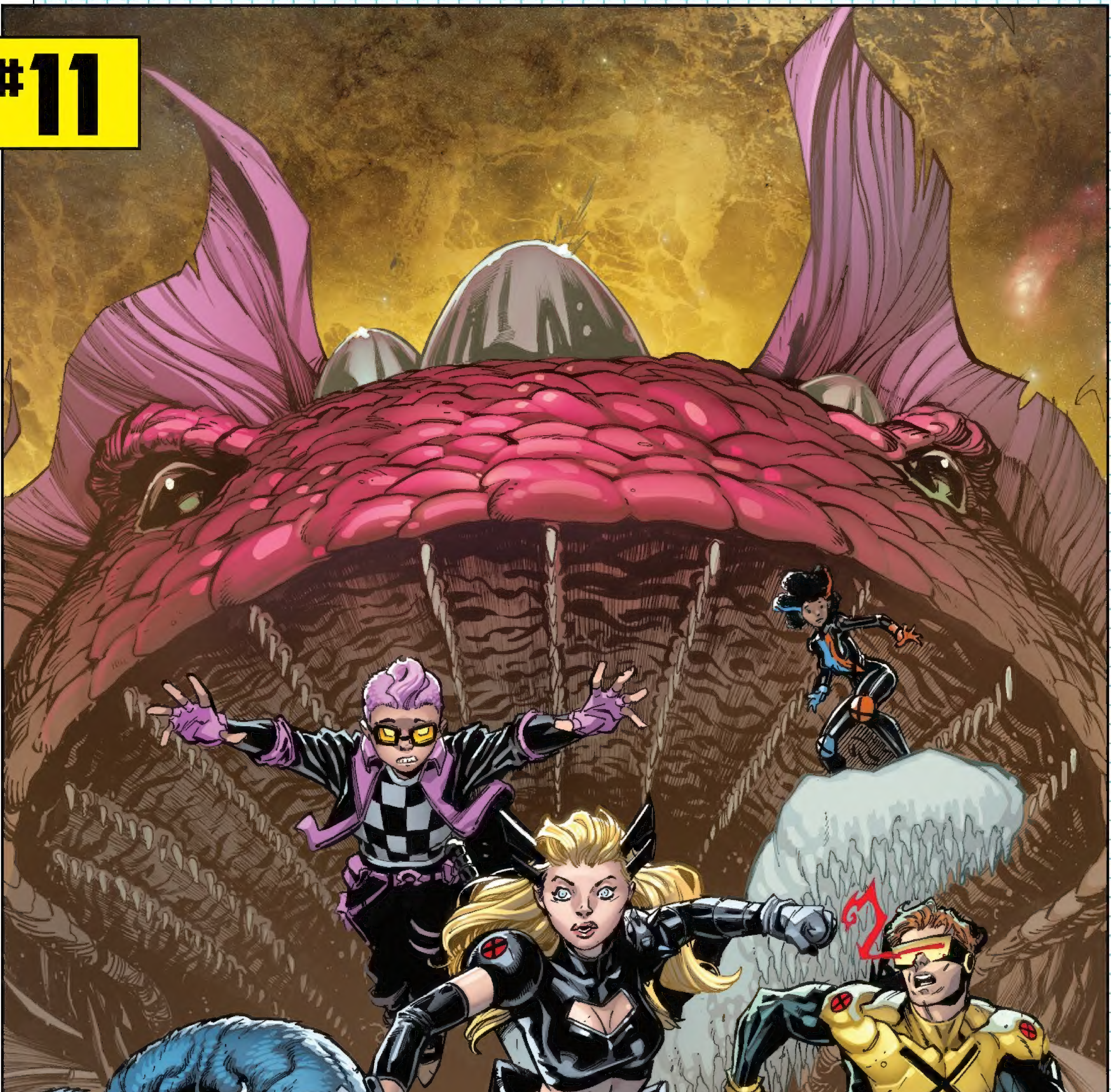
#11



“LIVE CAPTURE”

YUKON TERRITORY, CANADA.
KRASSSHHH
SKREEEE-E-E-ECH
CHONK
FLARK!

THE FACTORY. MERLE, ALASKA.
--FASCINATING GENE MARKERS WITHIN YOUR X-GENE EXPRESSION, MS. STARKEY.
HANK, I'VE *TOLD* YOU TO PLEASE CALL ME JENNIFER. OR JEN.
OF...OF *COURSE*, I APOLOGIZE.
ERR... AH, YES.
SIMPLY PUT, YOU APPEAR TO POSSESS SOME RANGE OF *METAMORPHIC* ABILITY.
TELL ME, WHEN YOU WERE FLEEING THE *UPSTARTS*, WERE YOU NEAR *WATER?*
YES!
I HAD THOUGHT--I HAD THOUGHT THAT I COULD *ESCAPE*, JUMPING IN THE *DETROIT RIVER.*
IT WAS A *CRAZY* THOUGHT, IT WAS *WINTER*, BUT THAT WAS WHEN...WHEN I *CHANGED*. I WAS SO SHOCKED I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT.
I HAD THOUGHT SO.
SIMPLY PUT, WHILE YOU'VE CURRENTLY ASSUMED AN *ICHTHYOID* EXPRESSION, THE VERITABLE *MENAGERIE* OF GENOMIC TEMPLATES WITHIN YOU INDICATES THAT IT IS BUT *ONE* FORM YOU MAY ASSUME.
A QUICK TEST IF YOU DON'T MIND.
THINK OF *FLYING.*
OF SOARING, DIVING, THE WAY YOU WOULD IN A *DREAM.*
O-OKAY.
FLYING.
FLYING.
FLYING.

NOTHING.
ERR...
I DON'T WISH TO CALL YOU A *LIAR*...
...BUT THIS IS CERTAINLY *SOMETHING.*
WHAT--?! I HAVE *FEATHERS!*
I HAVE *WINGS!*
CAN I *FLY?!*
WITH *PRACTICE?* I HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT IT IS *POSSIBLE.*
HANK...
CAN...CAN I *CHANGE*...
...CAN I CHANGE *BACK?*
TO HOW I *USED* TO BE? BEFORE ALL OF THIS?
WE DON'T HAVE THAT ANSWER YET.
WE'LL HAVE TO CONTINUE *EXPERIMENTING--*
WHAT?
CYCLOPS TO *ALL MINDS.*
WE HAVE A *SITUATION.*
BASE TEAM TO *STATUS SEVEN.*
FIELD TEAM...

...IS IN THE AIR.
DOES KATE PRYDE KNOW THAT YOU STOLE HER SHIP YET, QUENTIN?
"SALVAGED," SLIM. "SALVAGED."
I SEE YOU'RE NOT UP ON YOUR MARITIME LAW.
WELL, HAVE FUN EXPLAINING THE FINER POINTS OF IT TO HER WHEN SHE FINDS OUT.
HEY, SO, WHAT'RE WE HITTING?
AND HOW HARD?
WHADDYA MEAN "HOW HARD"? THERE'S ONLY ONE ANSWER, AND IT'S "AS HARD AS YOU CAN."
I'M EXPERIMENTING WITH NUANCE, CAIN.
PFFFFT.
IF YOU TWO ARE QUITE FINISHED.
TWENTY MINUTES AGO, WE PICKED UP WHAT LOOKS TO BE A SPACECRAFT ENTERING THE ATMOSPHERE OVER CANADIAN AIRSPACE.
NORMALLY NONE OF OUR NEVER MIND, BUT THIS SPACECRAFT CRASHED, AND NOW WHOEVER WAS IN IT IS MAKING A BEELINE TO THE YUKON/ALASKA BORDER AT HIGH SPEEDS.

AND THE *PROJECTED ENDPOINT* OF THIS "BEELINE"?
I'M GOING TO ASSUME THAT IT'S EITHER *MERLE* OR THE *FACTORY.*
TWENTY POINTS TO *TEMPER.*
WHAT?! THERE ARE *POINTS?*
I WANT POINTS!
WHO OR *WHAT*EVER WE'RE DEALING WITH, WE DON'T WANT THEM GETTING TO MERLE.
THE TOWN IS ALREADY SHAKEN UP ENOUGH BY O*N*E'S VISIT EARLIER, WE DON'T NEED THEM BLAMING US FOR BRINGING *ALIENS* TO THEIR DOORSTEP.
MAGIK, QUENTIN HAS AN INTERCEPT COURSE PLOTTED.
I NEED YOU TO INTERFACE WITH THE *X-DRIVE* AND JUMP US THERE.
WHAT'S IN IT FOR *ME?*
...
THIRTY POINTS?
SUCKER. I'D HAVE DONE IT FOR *TWENTY.*
OH MY GOD.
THEY'RE MAKING ME FEEL LIKE I'M TAKING *CRAZY PILLS,* PSYLOCKE.
I'VE ACTUALLY BEEN SLIPPING YOU CRAZY PILLS WHILE YOU SLEEP.
THAT AND *ARSENIC.*
WELL, NOW EVERYTHING MAKES *SENSE.*

VEEEEEEEEEEN
VASSHHH
VEEEEEEEEEN
UNKNOWN VISITOR:
THIS IS CYCLOPS, BROADCASTING FROM THE MARAUDER ACROSS ALL KNOWN GALACTIC LANGUAGES VIA SHI'AR UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR.
IF YOU'VE COME LOOKING FOR THE X-MEN, YOU'VE FOUND THEM.

AND IF YOU'VE COME LOOKING FOR A *FIGHT*, I'D ADVISE *AGAINST* IT.
SPOILSPORT!
SO *STERN*, SCOTTY!
IS THAT ANY WAY TO TALK TO YOUR *FATHER?*
...
QUENTIN, LAND THE *MARAUDER*, PLEASE.
OH MY *GOD*, SLIM!
"YOUR DAD'S MUSTACHE IS *INSANE!*"
FWOOOSH

SCOTTY.
IT'S BEEN *TOO LONG,* SON.
DAD.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU *TOO.*
NOW.
WHAT'S YOUR ANGLE?
ANGLE?
ANOTHER PERFECT JUMP.
WHERE'S THE *ALIEN?*
NO ALIEN.
GET THIS-- IT'S CYCLOPS' *DAD.*
CORSAIR?!
YOU'RE *CORSAIR, SCOURGE* OF THE *SPACELANES.*
YOU'VE *ALWAYS* GOT AN ANGLE.
"SCOURGE OF THE SPACE*WAYS,*" SON.
HEY, CORSAIR!
YOU'RE DEAD MEAT!
YOU THINK I'D *FORGET?*
YOU THINK I'D JUST *LET IT GO?*
YOU LEFT US TO THE *SHI'AR* AND *RAN OFF* WITH YOUR *TAIL* BETWEEN YOUR *LEGS!**
**SEE* NEW MUTANTS (2019) #1! --*TOM*

AH. RIGHT.
LOOK, WE'RE IN A SITUATION HERE, AND WE CAN'T AFFORD TO--
OH, WE'RE IN A SITUATION ALL RIGHT!
DAMN IT, MAGIK--
THOK
OOF. OUCH.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY DO SOMETHING.
WE ABSOLUTELY SHOULD NOT.
FACTORY TO THE MARAUDER!
MARAUDER. WHAT'S UP, McCOY?
WE PICKED UP A HUGE GRAVIMETRIC PULSE--SOMETHING OPENED A STARGATE JUST AT THE EDGE OF THE ATMOSPHERIC ENVELOPE!
THEY'RE ON AN INTERCEPT COURSE--
--YOU'RE ABOUT TO HAVE MORE COMPANY!

QUIT SCREWING AROUND! EMERGENCY EVAC!
MARAUDER IS LIFTING OFF RIGHT NOW!
I TOLD YOU, WE'RE IN A SITUATION!
YOU THINK I CRASHED HERE BECAUSE I'M A BAD PILOT?
BECAUSE I AM NOT.
EXPLAIN.
THEY'VE BEEN ON ME SINCE KREE/SKRULL SPACE.
AND ANY LEAD I HAD GOT WASTED BY THIS LITTLE FRACAS.

THEY'RE *HERE*.

GO.
GET US AIRBORNE!
FWOOSH
SZPOK
SZPOK
SZPOK
SZP

THAT'S AN *ACANTI*-- A *SPACE WHALE!* IT'S BEEN CONVERTED INTO A *WARSHIP.*
QUENTIN-- I NEED A BRAIN SCAN.
GIVE ME A SENSE OF THE ACANTI AND ANYONE *ON* IT.
ZERO CONSCIOUS THOUGHT FROM THE ACANTI.
IT'S BEEN *LOBOTOMIZED.*
THERE ARE *DOZENS* OF MINDS ON BOARD--
--*SKRULL* AND *BADOON,* MOSTLY.
QUENTIN, KEEP US OUT OF THEIR GUNSIGHTS.
TEMPER, CAN YOU *RETURN FIRE?*
WITH ALL THIS *COLD* TO CONVERT TO *HEAT?*
FIRE'S NO PROBLEM.
WEAPONS HOT, TEMPER.
PSYLOCKE, JUGGERNAUT, MAGIK.
YOU'RE WITH ME, *BOARDING PARTY.*
WE HIT THEM HARD AND CONVINCE THEM THIS ISN'T *WORTH* IT.

SCOTT, LISTEN TO ME, *PLEASE*, YOU *CAN'T*--
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT FROM *YOU*.
YOU BROUGHT THIS DOWN ON US, PUTTING *MY PEOPLE* IN DANGER TO GET SOME *BOUNTY HUNTERS* OFF YOUR *OWN* BACK.
MAGIK.
LET'S GO.
SCOTT, *DON'T*--
"RETURN FIRE," HE SAID.
RETURNED...

...WITH INTEREST.
FWOOSH

FLARK!
THE EARTHERS COOKED THIRTY PERCENT OF THE FORE SENSORS!
STAY ON THEM!
REMEMBER THE *PAYDAY!* WE NEED THE *SUMMERS* CREATURE ALIVE!
YOU'LL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR A *DIFFERENT* SUMMERS.
X-MEN...
...RAISE *HELL.*
AAAAHHH!
KID, I NEED TO TALK TO SCOTT!
SURE, WHY NOT, PATCHING YOU INTO TEAM PSI-COMMS.
NOT LIKE I'M *BUSY* OR ANYTHING.
GIVE *ME* THE CONTROLS, KID! I'VE RUN MORE SHI'AR BLOCKADES THAN YOU'VE HAD HOT MEALS.
GIVE ME A *BREAK,* OLD MAN. YOU DON'T HAVE THE *TELEPATHY* TO INTERFACE WITH THE *MARAUDER'S* AVIONICS.
YOU WANT TO TALK TO CYCLOPS, *TALK.*

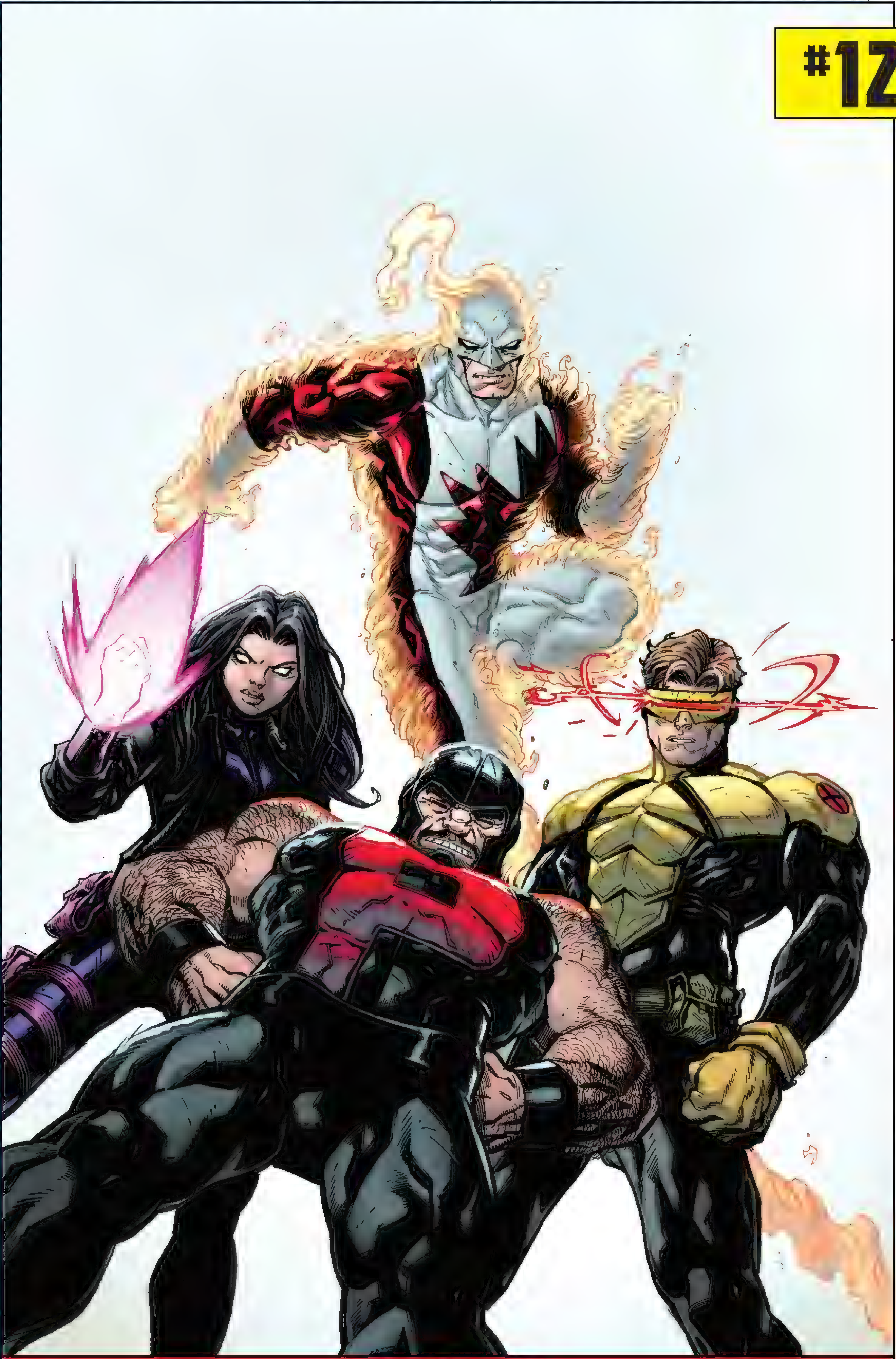
HIT HARD AND MOVE FAST!
SCOTT!
NOT NOW, DAD!
LISTEN TO ME!
THIS IS AN ENTIRE MERCENARY BATTALION!
THEY OPENED A STARGATE TO EARTH--DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THAT COSTS? BILLIONS OF CREDITS!
SON, THE SHI'AR HATE ME, BUT MY BOUNTY IS ONLY AT 2.5 MILLION CREDITS!
THE BOUNTY HUNTERS AREN'T AFTER ME!
THEY SAID THEY WERE AFTER "SUMMERS," DAD.
WHAT?
I DIDN'T COME TO YOU FOR HELP!
RUBY QUARTZ ARMOR.
WE'VE GOT HIM SURROUNDED.

I CAME TO WARN YOU, SON.
THEY'RE AFTER YOU.

DAMN IT!
IDIE! THINGS HAVE GONE TO HELL IN THERE, WE'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE!
MARAUDER, ARE YOU READING ME?
AND WHO THE HELL IS THIS?
THIS IS VINDICATOR, OPERATING UNDER DEPARTMENT H CLEARANCE.
WE HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED TO OPERATE IN U.S. AIRSPACE FOR THIS ENGAGEMENT AND ARE EN ROUTE TO SUPPORT YOU.
LOOK, LADY, LITERALLY NONE OF THAT MEANS ANYTHING TO ME, AND I'M A LITTLE BUSY RIGHT NOW--
WHAT THAT MEANS, YOU LITTLE PUNK, IS THAT THIS MESS STARTED IN CANADA, AND WE CLEAN UP OUR MESSES.

ALPHA FLIGHT
IS INBOUND.

#12



“WORK RELEASE”

DEPARTMENT H. THEN.
YOU'VE OBSERVED THE PRISONERS, AGENT ARSENAULT. YOU'VE STUDIED THEIR FILES.
SO PLEASE, TELL THE COUNCIL-- WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THEM?
IN SHORT, SIR? ALPHA FLIGHT ARE *HEROES.*
HOWEVER, THEY ARE ALSO *CRIMINALS.* HENCE THEIR *INCARCERATION.*
WHERE THOSE TWO IDENTITIES *INTERSECT* IS THE KEY TO THIS PROJECT.
"WHEN THEY SIDED WITH THE *MUTANTS* DURING THE...*UNPLEASANTNESS,** THEY BROKE THE LAW AND PAID THE PRICE FOR IT."
*SEE ALPHA FLIGHT (2023) #1-5! --TOM
NEWS ALPHA FLIGHT: TRAITORS?
THEY WERE IMPRISONED, JUSTICE WAS SERVED.
BUT *CANADA* WAS LEFT WITHOUT A *SUPERHUMAN RESPONSE TEAM.*
THIS IS A *WASTE* OF *RESOURCES* OF BOTH THE *SUPERHUMAN* AND *PUBLIC-RELATIONS VARIETIES.*
THEY ARE *HEROES,* WHICH MEANS THEY WISH TO DO GOOD, TO HELP PEOPLE. OUR PROJECT AIMS TO LET THEM DO JUST THAT.
AND THEY ARE *CRIMINALS,* WHICH MEANS THEY ARE AT THE MERCY OF THE STATE.
US. *DEPARTMENT H.*

"WHICH MEANS THAT ALPHA FLIGHT ARE *ENTIRELY UNDER OUR CONTROL.*
"JAMES MacDONALD HUDSON. *GUARDIAN.*
"A BORN SUPER HERO. IT HAS COST HIM *EVERYTHING,* INCLUDING HIS *LIFE* MORE THAN ONCE, AND STILL HE WILL *NOT QUIT.*
"EUGENE JUDD. *PUCK.*
"A MAN WITH A LONG HISTORY WHO HAS SEEN AND DONE EVERYTHING-- A LIVING *TALL TALE.*
"EXCUSE ME, 'IRONY'? NO, I DON'T BELIEVE IN IT.
"NARYA. *SNOWBIRD.*
"A LIVING GODDESS OF THE NORTH. AS SHE REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE *'MORTAL AUTHORITIES,'* I AM *SURPRISED* SHE HAS AGREED TO A POSITION WITH THE PROGRAM.
"MARRINA SMALLWOOD. *MARRINA.*
"AN...*ODD* ONE. SHE *TURNED HERSELF IN* SO AS TO BE WITH HER TEAMMATES. SHE HAS BEEN THROUGH A GREAT DEAL OF TRAUMA--ALPHA FLIGHT IS ALL SHE HAS.
"MICHAEL TWOYOUNGMEN. *SHAMAN.*
"OUR *CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR.* ALONE AMONG THE ALPHANS, DR. TWOYOUNGMEN *REFUSES* A POSITION WITH THE ALPHA FLIGHT PROGRAM ON *ETHICAL GROUNDS.*
"WE NEED *FURTHER LEVERAGE* ON HIM."

"AND THEN THERE IS THEIR *HANDLER* AND *NEW LEADER.*
"*YOU,* AGENT ARSENAULT.
"CODENAME: *VINDICATOR.*"
NOW.
GUARDIAN!
YOU'RE WITH *ME,* STRAFING RUN!
PUCK, MARRINA AND SNOWBIRD, YOU'RE OUR *BOARDING TEAM!* DISABLE THIS THING'S *HEART!*
I WANT IT PUT *DOWN* BEFORE IT REACHES A *POPULATED AREA!*

DON'T PUSH ME, ARSENAULT.
I'M RUNNING ALPHA FLIGHT, GUARDIAN, AND I'LL PUSH YOU AS HARD AS I FEEL IS NEEDED.
AND IT'S VINDICATOR IN THE FIELD.
GOD, WHAT A FRIGGIN' SKEET SHE IS.
DON'T LET HER GET UNDER YOUR SKIN, MAC.
WE ALL KNOW WHO SHOULD BE IN THAT SUIT...
...BUT HEATHER WOULD WANT YOU OUT HERE DOING GOOD, NOT ROTTING IN PRISON.
AS SHE IS IN A COMA, WHAT HEATHER HUDSON DOES OR DOES NOT WANT IS IMMATERIAL, PUCK.
WHEREAS WHAT I WANT IS YOUR MAIN PRIORITY.
THERE WILL BE A RECKONING FOR SPEAKING TO A GODDESS AS SUCH...
...VINDICATOR.
I'LL TAKE THAT UNDER ADVISEMENT, SNOWBIRD.
ANY TIME YOU THINK YOU'RE GODDESS ENOUGH...

"...YOU KNOW WHERE TO *FIND ME.*"
RUBY-QUARTZ ARMOR... OPTIC BLASTS AREN'T DOING *ANYTHING--*
JUGGERNAUT, NEED AN *ASSIST!*
BE THERE IN A *SECOND,* BOSS--
YOU THINK--
--THIS--
--CAN STOP--
--URGH--
--THE JUGGERNAUT?!
INERTIA FOAM CAN STOP A *NOVA* AT *TOP SPEED,* EARTHER.
AND YOU'RE NO *NOVA.*

BLEAGHHH!
WHAT--?
STAND STILL, YOU LITTLE SLIMEBALLS--
--YOU LITTLE--
THAT'S TWO THOUSAND TERAGRAGS OF PURE VERTIGO, EARTHER!
--BASTARDS!

QUENTIN!
THEY WERE READY FOR US--
COUNTERMEASURES FOR ALL OUR POWERS--
CORRECT.
IF YOU WISH TO CAPTURE SO STRANGE AN ALIEN AS AN X-MAN...
...THEN YOU HIRE THE VERY BEST IN EXTREME ZOOLOGY.
DR. XANTO STARBLOOD, AT YOUR SERVICE.
I THINK YOU'LL FIND MY CAPTURE METHODS SATISFACTORY, CAPTAIN KARKOS.
SATISFACTORY INDEED, DR. STARBLOOD.
I HAD HOPED TO GET MY HANDS ON MY FORMER STUDENTS, QUENTIN QUIRE AND IDIE OKONKWO.
BUT AS THE CONTRACT WAS JUST FOR THE LIVE CAPTURE OF SCOTT SUMMERS, I BELIEVE IT'S TIME FOR US TO LEAVE THIS DIRTBALL AND RETURN TO SPACE.

DAMN IT!
THEY'VE GOT SCOTT AND CAIN. I CAN'T *COOK* THE THING WITH THEM *INSIDE* OF IT.
THEY'RE BLOCKING PSI-COMMS.
WHAT ABOUT THE, WHAT ARE THEY, *CANADIANS?*
THEY'RE DOING THEIR *OWN* THING, CORSAIR.
VINDICATOR!
WE'RE FIGHTING OUR WAY TO THE *HEART* OF THIS CRITTER, BUT WE'RE ENCOUNTERIN' *HEAVY JABRONI RESISTANCE.*
PLEASE.
I'M FROM *NEWFOUNDLAND.*
I'VE SEEN WORSE ON A *SATURDAY NIGHT* ON *GEORGE STREET.*
WE HAVE LARGER PROBLEMS.
IF WE DON'T *GROUND* THIS BEAST...

"...WE'RE GOING TO BE TAKING A *TRIP* THAT WILL *ABSOLUTELY* VIOLATE THE TERMS OF OUR *PAROLE."*
WHY?
WHAT DO YOU WANT *ME* FOR?
BECAUSE *YOU,* MY FINE *EARTHER,* ARE ONE OF THE *FEW* DENIZENS OF THIS PRIMITIVE PLANET WITH *GALACTIC IMPORTANCE.*
THE *PHOENIX* IS ACTIVE ONCE MORE.
AND SHE IS MAKING A LOT OF PEOPLE *VERY ANGRY.*
BUT IF SHE COULD BE BROUGHT TO *HEEL?*
IF SOMEONE COULD *CONTROL* THE PHOENIX?
THEN THAT *SOMEONE* WOULD BE A *VERY POWERFUL SOMEONE* INDEED.
AND TAKE IT FROM A SEASONED SPACE PIRATE--
--THERE'S *NO BETTER WAY* TO *CONTROL* SOMEONE THAN TO HAVE A *HOSTAGE.*
LIKE A *MATE,* PERHAPS.

THEY'RE PULLING UP!
THEY'RE GOING TO ESCAPE ATMOSPHERE TO OPEN A STAR GATE!
WE NEED TO SLOW THAT THING DOWN.
VINDICATOR TO THE *MARAUDER:*
WHAT SORT OF *ENERGY-PROJECTION* CAPABILITIES DO YOU HAVE?
I CAN CREATE AS BIG A *FLAME BLAST* AS WE'D NEED--
--BUT I CAN'T *RISK* IT WITH OUR *PEOPLE* INSIDE!
LISTEN, WE CAN WORK TOGETHER. WE JUST NEED A LITTLE *FINESSE.*
BETWEEN ARSENAULT--VINDICATOR--AND MYSELF, WE CAN MANIPULATE *ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS.*
YOU SUPPLY THE *FIRE...*

...AND WE'LL SUPPLY THE FOCUS.
SHAAAASHHH

CAPTAIN!
THE EARTHERS GENERATED SOME KIND OF *PLASMA FLARE*-- SHEARED OFF THE *PORT MANEUVERING FLIPPER!*
WE CAN STILL GET OUT OF ATMOSPHERE!
AS LONG AS THE *REST* OF THE SHIP IS FUNCTIONING, WE CAN STILL *GET AWAY!*
SIR, THAT'S THE THING.
"WE'VE LOST COMMUNICATION WITH HEART CHAMBER ONE!"

LADIES, I THINK THIS FALLS TO *YOU.*
ALWAYS SO *SQUEAMISH,* PUCK.

WE'VE LOST HEART CHAMBER ONE!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE NOT GETTING OFF THIS ROCK *AFTER ALL,* CAPTAIN KARKOS.
YOU'RE SHOWING YOUR LACK OF *EDUCATION,* SUMMERS. AS ANY *EXTREME ZOOLOGIST* KNOWS:
ACANTI HAVE *TWO HEARTS.*
AND YOU CAN'T *COUNT,* STARBLOOD.
"YOU ONLY HANDLED *THREE* X-MEN.

"AND THERE WERE *FOUR* IN *MY* BOARDING PARTY."

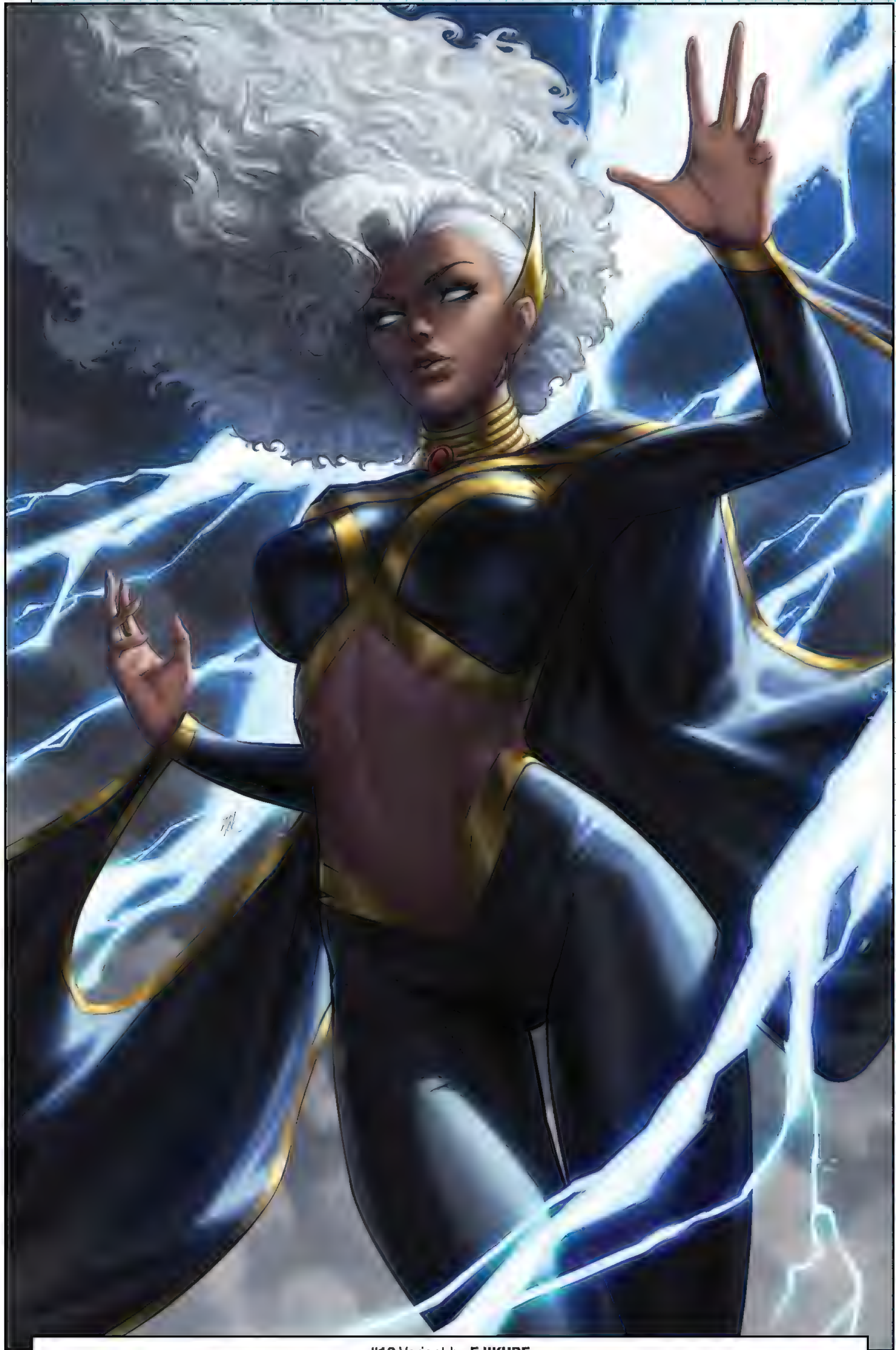
ARRROOOO!
UH-OH.
QUENTIN!
GIVE ME COORDINATES!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENED--THE ACANTI IS GOING DOWN!
OH, THANK YOU, I NEEDED A PSYCHIC SUPER-GENIUS TO TELL ME THAT!
I NEED TO GET OUR PEOPLE OUT. GIVE ME COORDINATES!
THEIR PSI-COMM JAMMING IS DOWN. I'M SENDING YOU PSYCHIC PINS FOR SLIM, CAIN, KWANNON AND THE CANADIANS!
"CANADIANS"?

HEY, GUYS--?
HOPE YOU--
--ENJOY--
--THE LANDING--
--LOSERS.
OH NO.

WHOOSH
WHAM
KRASSHH
KRKK

→KAFF KAFF←
DAMN THIS DIRTY LITTLE PLANET. *ALWAYS* A DISASTER--
I'D *STAY DOWN,* EH?
BUT *HEY,* BUDS. FEEL FREE TO TRY US OUT *AGAIN.*

LATER.
WELL, IT'S NOT ON THE TOWN, SO I SUPPOSE THAT'S A WIN.
AND MY DAD IS NEGOTIATING WITH THE KREE/SKRULL EMPIRE TO COLLECT THE BOUNTIES ON ALL THESE GUYS, SO HE'S HAPPY.
GLAD SOMEONE IS.
MAC...
YOU STOOD UP FOR US, AND YOU'RE STILL PAYING FOR IT.
YOU--ALL OF ALPHA FLIGHT DESERVES BETTER THAN THIS.
SAY THE WORD AND THE X-MEN WILL BREAK YOU OUT--
NO.
WE MADE OUR CHOICE, AND WE KNEW WHAT IT COULD MEAN.
AND THIS IS HOW WE SHOW THEM THAT THEY WERE WRONG.
AS A FUGITIVE, I'M NOTHING. BUT AS GUARDIAN? AS ALPHA FLIGHT? I'M A SYMBOL. WE ALL ARE.
WE SHAME THEM WITH EVERY LIFE WE SAVE.
I'LL BE FREE SOON ENOUGH, SCOTT.
SCOTT!
EXCUSE ME, MAC.
WHAT IS IT, HANK?
IT'S CHARLES, SCOTT. PROFESSOR XAVIER.
HE'S ESCAPED.



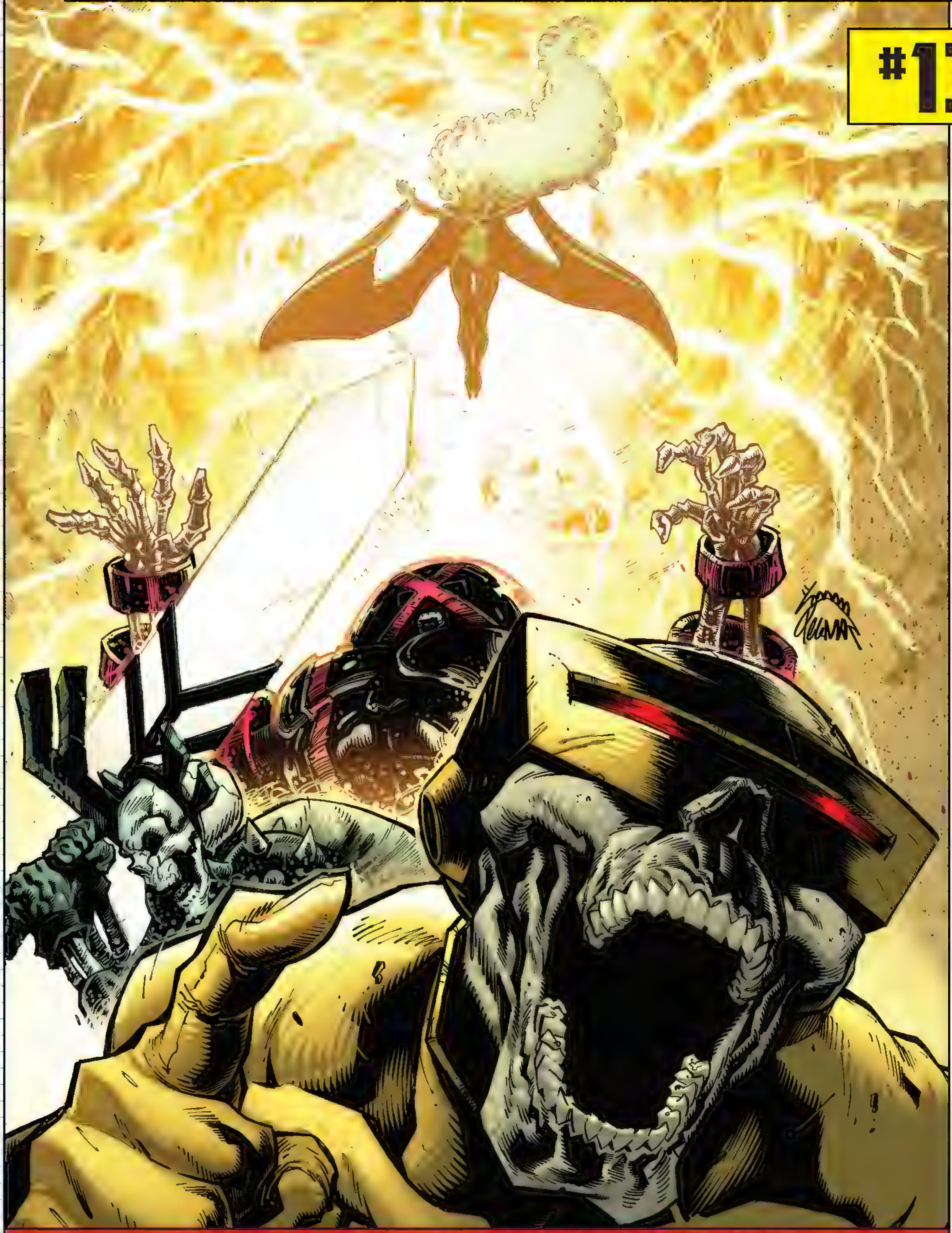
#13 Variant by **EJIKURE**

The X-Men's former mentor Professor Charles Xavier received a psychic distress call from his daughter Xandra, empress of the alien Shi'ar Empire. Xavier then broke out of Graymalkin Prison. He is also suffering from a mutant brain tumor that's affecting his telepathic powers, but he has refused to accept this truth.

The various X-Men remain divided over whether to aid or apprehend Xavier. He sought refuge with Storm at her Storm Sanctuary. When Cyclops and his team of X-Men arrived to recapture Xavier, Storm, utilizing new cosmic powers, easily defeated them, badly injuring Cyclops. But Beast infiltrated the engine room of the Storm Sanctuary--only to be discovered by Xavier.

X-MANHUNT

#13



"X-MANHUNT" CHAPTER 4: **"GODS AND MONSTERS"**

SAN FRANCISCO BAY.
~~UTOPIA.~~
~~NEW TIAN.~~
YET ANOTHER MUTANT HOMELAND...
...SHATTERED.
WE'VE LOST McCOY.
TEMPER, HOW'S SCOTT?
I'M CONVERTING THE FROST TO WARMTH, BUT IT'S DELICATE WORK.
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT, PSYLOCKE?
SINCE WHEN DOES STORM HAVE THAT MUCH JUICE?
I DON'T KNOW. BUT SAN FRANCISCO IS SUFFERING FROM XAVIER'S PSYCHIC BLEED.
IN HER WISDOM, STORM HAS FLOWN AN OMEGA PSYCHIC CONTAGION OVER A DENSELY POPULATED AREA.
MAKE SCOTT COMFORTABLE. MAGIK, PREPARE TO MOVE US.
STORM HAS GIVEN SHELTER TO THE MAN WHO STOLE MY MIND AND WILL IN GRAYMALKIN...

"...AND I WILL NOT LET THAT PASS."
THUNDERCLOUD. STORM'S MOBILE BASE. 1000 FEET UP.
HENRY, I SIMPLY CANNOT HAVE YOU DESTROYING THE THUNDERCLOUD.
AS MUCH AS YOU AND I MIGHT DISAGREE ABOUT WHAT I AM DOING, I HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES.
WHAT IS THIS--?
LIKE A LITTLE KNOT IN YOUR MIND--
I INSTALLED PSI-COMMS IN EVERYONE'S BRAINS, CHUCK.
A LIMITED TELEPATHY SUBROUTINE THAT USES MY BRAIN AS A HUB. SELF-SUSTAINING SO I DON'T HAVE TO PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO IT.
OH, QUENTIN...
...YOU ALWAYS WERE EXTREMELY CLEVER, EVEN AS A STUDENT.
HAS SCOTT SENT YOU TO CLIP MY WINGS? TELEPATH TO TELEPATH?
OMEGA TO OMEGA.
I PSYCHICALLY INOCULATED OUR X-MEN AGAINST YOUR TELEPATHIC BLEED, CHUCK. BUT I CAN'T DO THAT TO EVERYONE IN SAN FRANCISCO WHO YOU'RE DRIVING INSANE.
SO I HAVE TO CUT IT OFF AT THE SOURCE.
HAVE AT YOU, THEN.
BECAUSE I WILL NOT BE STOPPED.

LOBBY.
YOU ARE BEATEN, JUGGERNAUT.
BUT STILL YOU RISE?
›HAKK‹
PTUI.
WHAT...?
YOU THINK THIS...
...IS THE WORST... BEATIN' I'VE TAKEN?
RAAAAGHHH!!!
NOW, MY OLD MAN... BOY, HE COULD LAY A BEATING.
HIT ME SO HARD I THINK I WENT COLOR-BLIND ONE TIME.
YOU THINK I'M A MONSTER--
--AAAGHHH!!!--
--WHO DO YOU THINK MADE ME ONE?
CLATTER
SO IF YOU THINK YOU CAN TOP KURT MARKO FOR PUNISHMENT...
...YOU'VE GOT SOME CATCHIN' UP TO DO, LADY.
COME ON, THEN.
I CAN TAKE IT.

THE FACTORY.
MERLE, ALASKA.
I SHOULD *BE* THERE.
WE SHOULD *ALL* BE THERE.
XORN, YOU HAVE A *BLACK HOLE* FOR A BRAIN. IF CHARLES' PSYCHIC CONTAGION INDUCED YOU TO REMOVE YOUR HELMET, IT WOULD BE CATASTROPHIC.
AND, BEN, I THINK WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT *ONE* ASSAULT ON SAN FRANCISCO BY YOUR *THOUGHTFORM ALIEN FLEET* WAS ENOUGH.*
*THE FIRST ONE HAPPENED IN X-MEN #2. --TOM
FURTHERMORE--
EH?
YOINK.
WHAT THE *DEVIL*--?

THUNDERCLOUD ENGINE ROOM.
AAHH!
WELCOME BACK, HANK.
WHAT--?
OH GOD, IS QUENTIN FIGHTING CHARLES?
YEP.
AND NOW IT'S YOUR PROBLEM, BECAUSE I HAVE SOMEWHERE I HAVE TO BE.

THE XAVIER INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER LEARNING
ATTENTION PLEASE, CLASS.
AN "OMEGA MUTANT" IS CLASSIFIED AS "HAVING NO UPPER LIMIT TO THEIR POWER."
Ω × Ω
THEREFORE, IT WOULD FOLLOW THAT ANY CONFLICT BETWEEN OMEGA MUTANTS WITH THE SAME POWER COULD ONLY END IN ONE WAY: A STALEMATE.
WOULDN'T YOU AGREE...
Ω × Ω
...MR. QUIRE?
...OH GOD, OH GOD--

THE ANSWER, OF COURSE, IS THAT IF TWO OMEGA TELEPATHS WERE PERFECTLY MATCHED IN *POWER,* LIKE YOU AND I, FOR INSTANCE...
...THEN *OTHER* VARIABLES ARE WHAT WOULD DETERMINE THE *WINNER* IN ANY SUCH CONFLICT.
SUCH AS *EXPERIENCE.*
AHHHH!!!

LOBBY.
IZZAT ALL YOU GOT?!
MY WINDS CAN STRIP THE FLESH FROM EVEN YOUR BONES--
EH?
WIND.
IT'S JUST AIR, MOVING AROUND. AND WHAT MOVES IT?
TEMPERATURE.
YOU CONTROL WEATHER?
I CONTROL WHAT MAKES WEATHER.

I CONTROL FAR MORE THAN *WINDS*.
OH, YOU'VE GOT *SWORDS?*
I *LOVE* SWORDS.
SARNIOS' STORM OF SWORDS!
HOW YOU DOING, CAIN?
BROKE MY *HELMET*.
YOUR ARMOR'S BONDED TO YOUR SOUL, IDIOT! REMEMBER?
SUMMON IT *AGAIN*.
OH YEAH.
OH YEAH.

YOU SEE, I REMEMBER WHO YOU WERE *BEFORE*, QUENTIN.
BEFORE THE *HAIR.*
BEFORE THE *CLOTHES.*
BEFORE THE *REVOLUTIONARY POSTURING.*
JUST A VERY *CLEVER*, VERY *LONELY* BOY.
A BOY WHO WAS *INVISIBLE.*
A BOY WHO *CUT* HIMSELF ON THE *SHARP EDGES* OF THE *EMPTY PLACE* IN THE *PUZZLE* HE TRIED TO FIT HIMSELF INTO.
THIS NEED NOT GO ANY *FURTHER*, QUENTIN. I TAKE NO *PLEASURE* IN ANY OF THIS.
YOU CAN *SURRENDER* AT ANY TIME.
BUT UNTIL YOU DO, I FEAR THAT YOU *FORCE MY HAND.*

AGGK.
WELL, SHE DOESN'T *CUT*, CAIN--
WHAMMM
I ALWAYS SAID:
IF BLUNT-FORCE TRAUMA AIN'T WORKING FOR YOU--
--YOU AIN'T USING ENOUGH OF IT!
ARE YOU FINISHED?

WE'RE IN *DEEP*, CAIN.
YOU DON'T SAY.
SHE'S ***POSSESSED.*** I LOOKED INTO HER ***SOUL.***
AW, WHAT'RE YOU DOING LOOKIN' AT PEOPLE'S ***SOULS?*** IT'S ***WEIRD!***
I WAS RAISED BY ***DEMONS!***
THEY'RE ***VERY*** PREOCCUPIED WITH ***SOULS!***
SO SHE'S GOT A ***DEMON*** IN HER. ***YOU*** KNOW DEMONS-- ***HANDLE*** IT.
IT'S NOT A DEMON.
IT'S SOMETHING BIGGER.
SOMETHING ***WORSE.***
THEN WE WILL NEED HER ***BACK.***
YOUR FRIEND ***MAGGOTT*** HAS MADE HIMSELF A ***COCOON,*** STORM.
IT LEAVES HIM RATHER ***VULNERABLE.***

QUENTIN.
END THIS, PLEASE. SURRENDER.
THIS IS NO LONGER A CONTEST BETWEEN US. IT'S JUST ABUSE.
YOU WERE RIGHT.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF MYSELF, BACK THEN.
BUT EVEN THEN, I KNEW THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO BE YOU.
YOU KNOW, WE MIGHT HAVE THAT IN COMMON NOW.
BUT ENOUGH TALK--
YEAH.
ABOUT TIME YOU MET MY ATTORNEY.

ATTORNEY?
SOMETHING LEFT BEHIND. A *TRAP THOUGHTFORM* I PICKED OUT OF SOMEONE'S *MIND.*
SOMETHING I CAGED AND QUARANTINED IN MY *OWN* BRAIN, IN CASE IT COULD BE *USEFUL.*
IN CASE *YOU* GOT *CLOSE.*
CALL IT A *FAMILY REUNION,* CHUCK.
HELLO, CHARLES.
HELLO, *BROTHER.*
CASSANDRA NOVA?!
HOW--?
BLAARRGHHH!

YOU ARE GOING TO *END* THIS--*NOW.*
AS YOU *WISH.*
I AM NOT TALKING TO *YOU.*
I AM TALKING TO *ORORO MUNROE.*
YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE BACK CONTROL OF YOUR BODY, STORM.
BECAUSE YOU HAVE ACTED *WRONGLY.*
PEOPLE IN THE CITY BELOW ARE *HURT,* IF NOT *DYING,* BECAUSE OF WHAT *YOU'VE* BROUGHT NEAR THEM.
SO RETURN AND TAKE *RESPONSIBILITY.*
OR I WILL DRIVE MY SWORD INTO THE MAN WITHIN THIS COCOON AND *KILL* HIM.
BECAUSE *THAT* IS THE LESSON I AM HERE TO *TEACH:*
WHEN A BEING OF *YOUR POWER* ACTS WRONGLY, *PEOPLE DIE.*
YOU HAVE BEEN WORSHIPPED AS A *GODDESS.*
OF *COURSE* YOU CAN'T IMAGINE BEING *WRONG.*
SO LET THAT *SHAME* GIVE YOU *POWER* AND TAKE CONTROL *BACK.*

BUGS--
BUGS--
AAARRGHH!
WHAT--?
SLEEP, PROFESSOR.
THE HELL TOOK YOU SO LONG?
HE HAD TO REMOVE THE HELMET HIMSELF, QUENTIN.
IN THAT PSYCHIC TURBULENCE, THERE WAS LITTLE I COULD DO BUT WAIT.
I WON, BY THE WAY.
McCOY.
DID YOU USE SOME MANNER OF DIRTY TRICK?
OF COURSE I DID.

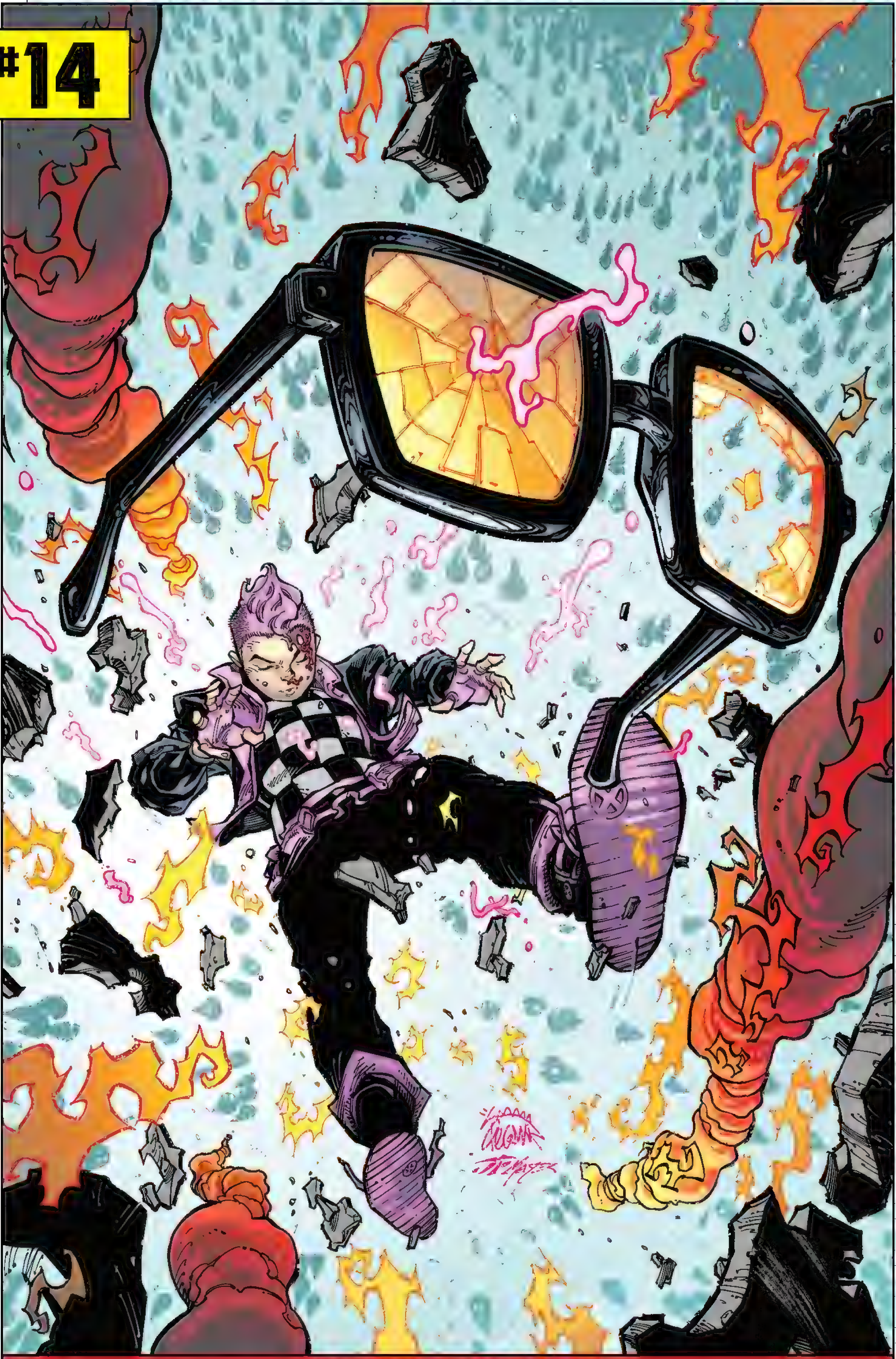
STOP. I AM...MYSELF ONCE MORE.
GET YOUR FOOT OFF MAGGOTT.
WOULD YOU REALLY DO IT, PSYLOCKE? WOULD YOU KILL AN INNOCENT MAN TO PUNISH ME?
YOU FORGET WHO I WAS.
I'VE KILLED MORE INNOCENT MEN THAN SOME DISEASES.
GODDESS YOU MAY HAVE BEEN...
...BUT WE ARE JUST MONSTERS.
AND WE ARE TAKING THIS MONSTER WITH US.
IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY WITH THIS ARRANGEMENT, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME.
I HEAR YOU LIKE TO SETTLE THINGS WITH KNIVES.
I'D BE HAPPY TO ACCOMMODATE YOU.
"JUST MONSTERS."

"ARE YOU SO CERTAIN THAT YOU ARE JUST?"
URGH.
PSYLOCKE TO CYCLOPS.
ARE YOU AWAKE YET?
BARELY.
STATUS?
MISSION COMPLETE.
WE TELEPORTED A LITTLE WAYS DOWN THE BEACH SO AS NOT TO LAND ON YOU.
MISSION CASUALTIES?
NONE BUT COMPROMISE. WE HAD TO PROMISE STORM NOT TO RETURN CHARLES TO GRAYMALKIN. WITH HER RESISTANCE TO TELEPATHIC ATTACK, SHE WAS UNAWARE OF HIS PSYCHIC BLEED.
SOMETHING EXTREMELY STRANGE IS HAPPENING TO HER, AND NOW MAGGOTT AS WELL.
IT WILL BEAR OBSERVATION.
AS WILL CHARLES.
HE'S BEEN HEAVILY SEDATED, BUT WE SHOULD BE MOVING--
PUT THE BALD MAN DOWN, HANK.

X-FACTOR
WILL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

CONTINUED IN X-MANHUNT!

#14



“SEARCH AND RESCUE”

THE FACTORY. MERLE, ALASKA.
I APPRECIATE YOU MAKING YOURSELF AVAILABLE, CYCLOPS.
IF THE TOWN NEEDS THE X-MEN, THE X-MEN ARE AVAILABLE...
...CHIEF ROBBINS.
I KNOW THINGS ARE... DIFFICULT WITH YOU AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RIGHT NOW.
BUT THE SIMPLE FACT IS THAT WE NEED EVERY RESOURCE WE CAN PUT TOGETHER, AND YOU'VE GOT A, WELL, A SPACESHIP.
WHAT IS IT? A MEDICAL EMERGENCY?
THE MARAUDER CAN BE PARKED AT ANY MAJOR HOSPITAL IN MINUTES--
NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT.
I NEED YOU ON SEARCH AND RESCUE, MR. SUMMERS. WE'VE GOT A MISSING KID, AND I'M AFRAID SHE'S GONE INTO THE WILD.
SWEET HOME
SCOTT, PLEASE. OF COURSE WE'LL HELP.
THE MISSING GIRL--DO YOU HAVE A NAME, A DESCRIPTION?

GIRL, 13 YEARS OLD. BROWN HAIR, BROWN EYES.
YOU MIGHT EVEN HAVE SEEN HER--HER MOM'S ONE OF THOSE ANTI-MUTANT CRAZIES.
GIRL'S NAME IS *PIPER COBB.*

I TOLD YOU, I'M NOT PICKING HER MIND UP ANYWHERE.
CAST A WIDER NET, QUENTIN.
I'M DOING A WIDEBAND PSYCHIC SCAN OF EVERY THINKING LIFE-FORM IN THE SEARCH AREA, SLIM.
DON'T CALL ME THAT.
NO SENTIENT MINDS. EITHER THE KID ISN'T HERE, OR...
YOU KNOW WHAT PIPER COBB MEANS TO IDIE, QUENTIN.
→SIGH←
FINE, FINE, I'LL KEEP THE SEARCH PATTERN AND APPLY GOOD OLD EYEBALLS TO IT.
SPEAKING OF WHICH: YOU DO KNOW I WEAR GLASSES, RIGHT?
I DO.
WHICH IS WHY YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY SET OF EYES I HAVE UP THERE.
JEN, HOW ARE YOU DOING?

I'M AMAZING.
HANK THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO TAKE TIME TO PRACTICE...
...BUT IT'S LIKE MY BODY JUST KNOWS WHAT TO DO.
WELL.
IT WOULD APPEAR THAT WHEN YOU ALTER YOUR TAXONOMIC KINGDOM, THE NEW PHYSIOLOGICAL FEATURES ARE ACCOMPANIED BY CERTAIN INSTINCTUAL KNOWLEDGE.
FASCINATING, REALLY.
BETWEEN YOUR HAWK EYES AND YOUR INSTINCTUAL PREY DRIVE, YOUR RAPTOR-FORM SHOULD HELP IN YOUR SEARCH.
JUST TRY NOT TO GET CARRIED AWAY AND DIVE-BOMB PIPER IF YOU FIND HER. SHE'S A PERSON, NOT A MOUSE.
I'LL DO MY BEST, SCOTT.

QUENTIN AND JEN ARE OUT THERE LOOKING FOR PIPER...
...AND THE REST OF US *SIT HERE?*
THEY'RE OUR *FAST-MOVERS,* COVERING THE MOST GROUND, IDIE.
WHEN THEY LOCATE HER, *THEN* WE TELEPORT OUT.
SHE ASKED US FOR *HELP.*
AND WE DIDN'T *GIVE* HER ANY. SENT HER *BACK* TO HER *CRAZY, MUTANT-HATER MOTHER.*
AND NOW SHE'S GONE?
IF HER HOME WAS *SO BAD* THAT SHE HAD TO WALK INTO THE *WILDERNESS?* IF SHE THOUGHT THAT WAS THE *ONLY CHOICE* LEFT FOR HER?
THAT'S ON ALL OF *US.*
THAT'S ON THE *X-MEN.*
I'M TAKING CORSAIR'S JETBIKE. I'M GOING OUT THERE.
YOU'RE NOT *RATED* FOR IT--
I'LL FIGURE IT OUT!
...
THOUGHTS, KWANNON?
SHE'S *YOUNG,* AND SHE'S *WORRIED.* AND MORE *IMPORTANTLY,* SHE IS *PHYSIOLOGICALLY INCAPABLE* OF *FREEZING TO DEATH.*
LET HER GO-- IT'S WHAT SHE NEEDS RIGHT NOW.

IT'S ALL A *NUMBERS GAME.* PROBABILITIES. AND I *KNOW* PROBABILITIES. FINANCE, *MARKETS,* IT'S *ALL* PROBABILITIES.
TWO X-MEN LOOKING FOR ONE KID? THE ODDS ARE *RIDICULOUS.*
BUT IF I PUT A COUPLE DOZEN *UFOs* IN THE SKY...
BEN.
WALK WITH ME, IF YOU WOULD BE SO GOOD.
I THINK IT'S TIME WE TALKED.
I HAVE BEEN *TRYING,* WITH *LIMITED* SUCCESS, TO TAKE YOU UNDER MY WING.
CAN YOU THINK OF *WHY* I SHOULD DO SUCH A THING?
WELL, *OLDER MEN* HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A PARTICULAR *WEAKNESS* OF MINE--
THIS IS NOT A TIME TO BE *AMUSING.*
YOU'VE BEEN *EAGER* TO BE A PART OF WHAT WE DO HERE. YOU'VE SHOWN SHOCKINGLY *LITTLE* DIFFICULTY IN *ADAPTING* TO HAVING BEEN MADE A *MUTANT.*

I'M A GAY CHINESE AMERICAN, MAGNETO.
I'VE *ALWAYS* BEEN MADE TO FEEL LIKE AN OUTSIDER. AND OUTSIDERS ARE *NEVER* FULLY SAFE.
SO I GOT VERY GOOD AT *MAKING MONEY*, BECAUSE MONEY WAS A KIND OF *POWER*, AND POWER *PROTECTS* AN OUTSIDER.
NOT THAT IT PROTECTED ME FROM *3K.*
BUT BEING A MUTANT IS JUST *ANOTHER* SHADE OF BEING AN OUTSIDER.
AND IT COMES WITH ITS *OWN* POWER.
I JUST... I JUST HAVE TO *FIGURE IT OUT.*
I JUST HAVE TO *MASTER* IT.
YOU *LAID SIEGE* TO *A CITY* WITHOUT EVEN FULLY *COMPREHENDING* WHAT YOU WERE DOING, BEN.
YOUR MUTANT GIFT IS ONE OF *TREMENDOUS POWER* AND *RISK.* THAT IS SOMETHING *I* AM FAMILIAR WITH. BUT YOU ALSO HAVE LITTLE *CONTROL* OVER IT.
THAT IS *ALSO* SOMETHING I AM FAMILIAR WITH.
MUTANTS OF *TREMENDOUS POWER* ARE *NEEDED* BY OUR PEOPLE, BEN.
AND IF *MY* POWER CANNOT BE RELIED ON TO PROTECT MUTANTS ANYMORE, WE MUST ENSURE THAT *YOURS* CAN.

THIS IS THE *MEANS.*
THE *X-MEN* GOT THEIR BIRD IN THE AIR, STANDARD SEARCH-AND-RESCUE PATTERN.
NO, COVER'S INTACT. *PSYCHIC CAMO* KEPT THEIR *SNEAKY-THINKERS* OFF ME.
NEGATIVE. THEY HAVEN'T FOUND THE SUBJECT *YET,* UNLESS THEY'RE KEEPING UP THE *SEARCH PATTERN* TO THROW OFF *OBSERVERS.*
THAT'S *BEST GUESS.*
WELL, IF YOU WANT TO KNOW SO *BAD,* FIGURE OUT HOW TO COMPROMISE THEIR *PSI-COMMS,* THEN, "ZEALOT."

DO NOT PRESUME TO LECTURE ME, "MEANS."
YOU BRING NOTHING TO THE GREAT TABLE. YOU ARE A WEAPON, NOTHING MORE.
YOU AREN'T EVEN A MUTANT.
MAYBE NOT, ZEALOT. BUT YOU NEEDED SOMEONE WHO KNEW HOW TO KILL MUTANTS BAD ENOUGH YOU OFFERED A SEAT AT THE GREAT TABLE.
AND THE LEGACY VIRUS HAS GOT NOTHIN' ON ME.
DO YOU THINK THAT IMPRESSES ME?
NO ONE HAS MORE MUTANT BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS THAN I DO, MEANS.
ZEALOT, PLEASE.
REMEMBER, YOU ARE THERE TO ALLOW THE SUBJECT TO ACT UNIMPEDED AND TO OVERSEE THE TEST.
ZEALOT-- NO. ENOUGH OF CODENAMES AND TITLES, CASSANDRA NOVA.
AND ACTUALLY, YOU KNOW WHAT?

I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE X-MEN'S PSI-COMMS *MYSELF.*
AND YOU CAN CALL ME *WYRE.*

ELSEWHERE.
gotta find it
CRUNCH
gotta find it
gotta be free
need to be free

ELSEWHERE.
QUENTIN.
IDIE.
ANYTHING?
BWOOOOOM
NOTHING YET.
BUT LOOK, UH, DON'T...DON'T WORRY?
WE'LL FIND HER.
SHE'S JUST A LITTLE KID, QUENTIN.
A HUMAN LITTLE KID.
SHE DOESN'T HAVE MUTANT POWERS OR SPACESHIPS OR ANYTHING, AND IT'S COLD!
LOOK.
I'M NOT GOOD AT THIS. YOU KNOW THIS.
I'M BAD AT COMFORTING PEOPLE. IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WE BROKE UP, REMEMBER?
BUT ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS FIND HER.
NO MATTER HOW BAD SHE IS, AS LONG SHE'S ALIVE, XORN AND McCOY CAN FIX HER UP.
OOOOOOOOO
AND IF SHE ISN'T ALIVE?

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY, IDIE--?
WAIT.
NO WAY--
gotta--
UTT--
WHAT? WHERE AM I--?
IDIE, I'VE GOT HER! PINNED HER LOCATION IN EVERYONE'S BRAIN--
HANG ON, WHAT--?
DEET
DE
DEET
DEET
DEE
"TARGET LOCK-- SOMEONE'S GOT A TARGET LOCK ON ME--"
END TRANSMISSION.

BOOM

SCOTT?
CYCLOPS?
SCOTT, MY LOCATOR SPELL ISN'T WORKING--
WAIT, SCOTT?
WHY THE HELL AM I SPEAKING OUT LOUD?
PSI-COMMS ARE DOWN.
X-MEN TO CONDITION RED.
QUENTIN!
"SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO QUENTIN."

SCOTT!
SOMEONE SHOT DOWN THE *MARAUDER!*
I'VE GOT YOUR COORDINATES FROM THE BIKE'S TRANSPONDER, IDIE.
RESCUE TEAM IS INBOUND.
TELL THEM TO ***HURRY--***
OH.
WHAT THE HELL IS ***GOING ON?***
THAT WAY.
THE *MARAUDER* WENT DOWN, AND QUENTIN WENT ***QUIET.*** HE'S ***NEVER*** QUIET--
GOT IT.
STAY CLOSE, I'LL TELEPORT US ALL TO THE CRASH SITE.
I--
I ***CAN'T.*** PIPER COBB'S STILL ***OUT*** THERE--QUENTIN PINNED HER LOCATION IN MY MIND BEFORE HE--
I HAVE TO GO ***GET*** HER.
ARE YOU ***KIDDING?!*** ONE OF ***OURS*** IS ***DOWN--***
HEY.
IT'S COOL, IDIE. YOU GO GET THE KID--WE'LL MAKE SURE SHRIMPO'S OKAY.

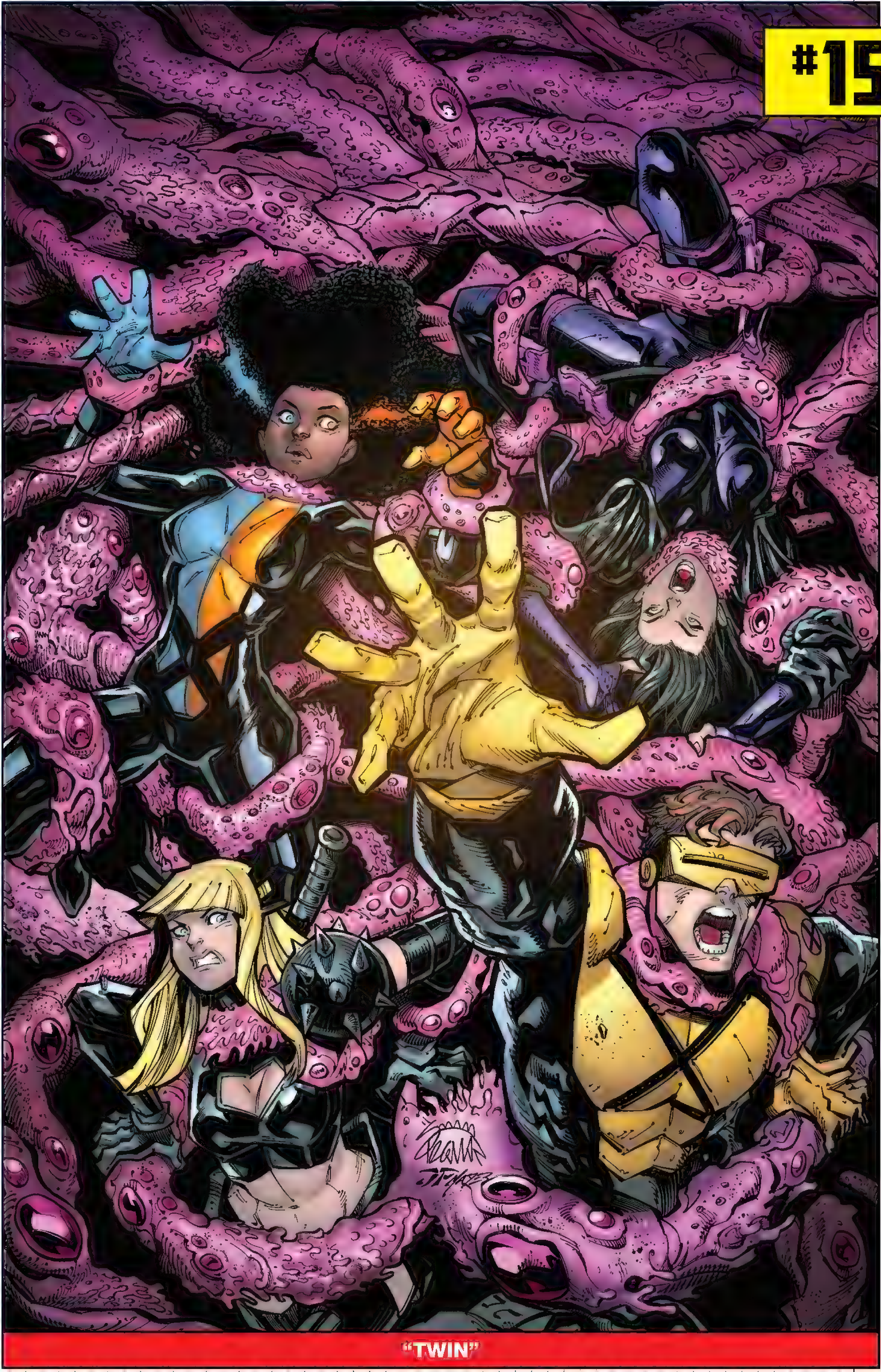
THE HELL WAS *THAT,* CAIN?!
BWOOOOOOOOO
"IT'S COOL"?!
HEY.
NOT EVERYONE'S AS *MEAN* AS *US.*
QUIRE USED TO BE *IMPORTANT* TO HER. IF HE'S *DEAD...*
"...YOU REALLY WANT TO MAKE HER *SEE* THE *BODY?"*
...
...WHATEVER. LET'S GO MAKE SURE THERE'S ENOUGH OF QUIRE LEFT TO HEAL.
AND THEN LET'S FIND WHO SHOT OUR SHIP DOWN AND MAKE SURE THERE *ISN'T.*

CYCLOPS TO THE FACTORY.
UNTIL NEW INFORMATION PROVES OTHERWISE, WE ARE UNDER ATTACK.
THE MARAUDER IS DOWN. QUENTIN-- KID OMEGA IS MISSING, AND PSI-COMMS ARE INOPERATIVE.
WE ARE ON WAR FOOTING.
BE READY FOR ANYTHING.
CYCLOPS OUT.

PIPER!
YOU'RE OKAY, I THOUGHT--
NEVER MIND WHAT I THOUGHT. PIPER, WHAT ARE YOU DOING BY THE DEAD ACANTI?
LET ME WARM YOU UP--
YOU'RE NOT COLD, HOW ARE YOU NOT COLD?
WAIT, YOUR FEET, YOUR ARM--
--BUT YOU'RE NOT A MUTANT, HANK SAID YOU WEREN'T A MUTANT!
i didn't want anyone to know
not even her
so i changed her blood and hair
so he'd think we were normal
not mutant
"HER"? HER WHO?
piper
my twin
i didn't want piper to know
because she ate me
absorbed me before we were born

all this time hiding in *her* body
but with all this *meat*
now *i* can have a body
and i won't have to *hide anymore*

#15



“TWIN”

THIRTEEN YEARS AND SEVEN MONTHS AGO.
--THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HAVE *TWINS?*
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE *OTHER* ONE?
THIS HAPPENS, MS. COBB, DON'T WORRY.
MANY PREGNANCIES *BEGIN* AS TWINS, ESPECIALLY AS EARLY ON AS WE DID YOUR PREVIOUS SCAN.
RESORPTION ISN'T UNCOMMON, NOR IS ONE EMBRYO ABSORBING THE OTHER.
LIKE I SAID, IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
THE REMAINING EMBRYO APPEARS PERFECTLY HEALTHY, SO LET'S MAKE SURE IT *STAYS* THAT WAY.
OKAY.
AS LONG AS NOTHING'S GONE WRONG.
I *KNOW* IT'S EARLY ON, I *KNOW* THINGS CAN *HAPPEN*...
...BUT THIS KID IS ALL THAT MATTERS NOW.

NOW.
"I'M NOT GOING TO LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO HER."
PIPER!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
i have been trapped for thirteen years
in the body of a sister who took everything from me
in a house with a mother who would hate me
goodbye piper
now i am free--
AH!
I-IDIE?
IDIE, WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE AM I--?
DON'T WORRY, I'M GOING TO KEEP YOU SAFE--
OF COURSE YOU WILL.
EVERYONE HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO CONCERNED FOR PIPER COBB.
WHO HAS A NAME.
PIPER COBB, WHO HAS A BODY, WHO HAS A LIFE.

I'VE *LEFT* HER BODY TO MAKE MY *OWN.*
JUST LIKE I'M GOING TO MAKE MY OWN *LIFE.*
JUST LIKE I'M GOING TO MAKE MY *OWN NAME.*
AND YOU'RE GOING TO ALL LEARN TO *FEAR* IT.

ALASKA.
MARAUDER
CRASH SITE.
HAVE *EITHER* OF YOU FOUND *ANY* SIGN OF QUENTIN?
WRECKAGE IS SPREAD OVER A MILE, AT LEAST.
SHRIMPO COULD BE *ANYWHERE.*
XORN, *YOU* GOT ANYTHING?
KICK
FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH, JUGGERNAUT, I DON'T SENSE A *DEATH* HERE.
BUT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO FIND HIM *SOON.*
UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, THERE'S A *STORM* COMING IN.
SCREW THIS.
LISTEN UP, CREEPS. I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR FORMALITIES.
THIS IS AN OFFER OF *MINIONSHIP, SHORT-TERM.*
TASK: SEARCH AND RESCUE.
PAYMENT IN ADVANCE: *BLOOD.*
WHAT ARE YOU *DOING,* MAGIK?
OUTSOURCING.
WE HEAR AND OBEY, MISTRESS.

FROM BLEAK LIMBO WE COME, DREAD MISTRESS!
FOR WHAT DO WE SEARCH? AND MUST WE RESCUE?
YES. FIND ME THE WITCHBREED QUENTIN QUIRE.
AND THE ADVANCE PAYMENT, DREAD MISTRESS?
I'M A WOMAN OF MY WORD.
DRINK UP, AND THEN GET TO WORK.
SO GROSS.
LIKE YOU'RE SOME VIRGIN WHEN IT COMES TO DEMONIC PACTS.
ERR...
TEMPER TO ALL POINTS!
GO FOR MAGIK.
YOU FIND THE KID?
I'VE GOT PIPER, BUT WE'VE GOT A BIGGER PROBLEM!
OH YEAH?

KRAK
HOW BIG?
RAAAAGHH!
GIANT-MONSTER BIG, ILLYANA!

...DAMN IT.
JEN, I NEED YOU TO DO A *FLYBY* AND *ASSESS* THE SITUATION.
ASSESS?
I'M NOT AN *X-MAN,* SCOTT. I CAN'T *FIGHT--*
AND I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO.
CHECK OUT TEMPER'S GIANT MONSTER.
GIVE ME A **HEADING.** *WE NEED TO KNOW IF IT'S MOVING TOWARD THE* **TOWN** *OR THE* **FACTORY.**
I KNOW YOU'RE NOT RATED FOR COMBAT. BUT WITH QUENTIN DOWN, OUR **TACTICAL CAPACITY'S** *BEEN HAMSTRUNG.*
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK.
AND I NEED *DATA.*
SHE'S NOT *READY* FOR THIS KIND OF THING, PSYLOCKE.
HE'S *PUSHING* HER.
SHE *NEEDS* A PUSH, BEAST.
YOU'VE BEEN *CODDLING* HER.
SHE'S BEEN LIVING IN *TERROR* SINCE THE *UPSTARTS* CAME FOR HER.
AND IF SHE'S GOING TO GET *OVER* THAT, SHE NEEDS TO *FACE FEAR* OUT IN THE *WORLD,* NOT HIDING IN YOUR *LAB,* HANK.

RAAAGHH!
IDIEEEE!!!
HANG *ON*, PIPER!
WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU THINK YOU'RE **DOING**, *CHILD?*
EH?

SPEAK IN YOUR MIND, NOT ALOUD.
I SPENT THIRTEEN YEARS TRAPPED IN HER BODY.
SO I THOUGHT I'D TRAP HER IN MY SPLENDID NEW ONE.
NOT THAT SHE'D SURVIVE AS LONG AS I DID.
JOIN ME FOR A MOMENT, IF YOU WOULD. IN A PLACE WE CAN SPEAK.
THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM
WHAT?
WHERE AM I?!
I WON'T BE TRAPPED AGAIN!
CALL THIS A PSYCHIC MEETING ROOM.
A PLACE WHERE WE CAN SPEAK AT THE SPEED OF THOUGHT, WHILE NO TIME AT ALL PASSES IN THE "REAL WORLD."
LOOK AT YOU, MY DEAR LITTLE BIOKINETIC.
YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE A SELF-IMAGE. YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE AN IDEA OF WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE.
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE--
ON THE CONTRARY, CHILD.

MY NAME IS *CASSANDRA NOVA.*
AND I KNOW *EXACTLY* WHAT IT IS LIKE.
TO HAVE EVERYTHING TAKEN FROM YOU.
TO BE LEFT WITHOUT A *BODY* OR A *NAME* YOU DID NOT *TAKE* FOR YOURSELF.
AND NOW YOUR *SISTER* AND HER *PET X-MAN* ARE PLAYING YOU FOR A *FOOL.*
THEY'RE *LAUGHING* AT YOU.
EH?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THEY'RE LEADING YOU BY THE *NOSE.*
KEEPING YOU AWAY FROM THEIR *PRECIOUS LITTLE TOWN.*
YOU ARE A *MUTANT.*
YOU ARE *POWERFUL* AND *BEAUTIFUL* AND *BEYOND* ALL OF THE SAPIENS WHO MADE THEIR *LIVINGS* BUILDING *MACHINES* TO *MURDER* YOU.
AND *I* THINK IT'S TIME YOU *SHOWED* THEM ALL *THAT.*

HUH?
THE MONSTER'S CHANGED DIRECTION!
IT'S NOT CHASING US ANYMORE!
WHAT DIRECTION?
THE TOWN.
SCOTT, WE NEED TO *STOP* IT BEFORE IT REACHES *MERLE*--

WHAT'S THE *PLAN*, CYCLOPS?
ONE OF *OURS* IS STILL *MISSING*--
ILLYANA, YOU AND CAIN GO--YOU'VE ALREADY SET YOUR IMPS TO THE TASK.
I'LL KEEP SEARCHING FOR QUENTIN. I CAN COVER MORE GROUND ALONE.
JUST TELL SCOTT THAT I'LL BE OUT OF COMMS--THE WALKIES DON'T LIKE THE *BLACK HOLE* IN MY HEAD.
MAGIK, JUGGERNAUT, TELEPORT TO THE ACANTI CRASH SITE AND PURSUE INTERCEPT COURSE.
JEN, EVAC PIPER COBB.
TEMPER, KEEP EYES ON THE HOSTILE, BUT DO NOT ENGAGE WITHOUT SUPPORT.
PSYLOCKE AND I ARE EN ROUTE VIA QUINJET.
HENRY, I THINK IT IS TIME WE PREPARED MY *PROSTHETIC*.
HM.
THE SITUATION *DOES* SEEM TO CALL FOR IT.
I'LL GET IT *WARMED UP*.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING AT, IDIE?
PIPER WASN'T THE MUTANT!
HER TWIN WAS!
A PARASITIC TWIN, DORMANT IN HER BODY UNTIL X-GENE ACTIVATION WOKE HER UP!
SHE HAS SOME KIND OF--MEAT POWERS--
BIOKINESIS.
FLESH MANIPULATION.
WE'VE SEEN IT BEFORE, ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS. LIONEL JEFFRIES, KENJI UEDO...
...THE TWIN MUST HAVE SEEN THE DEAD ACANTI'S BIOMASS AS AN OPPORTUNITY.
TO USE HER POWERS TO CREATE A BODY OF HER OWN, TO ESCAPE...
TO TAKE REVENGE.
BUT...THAT MEANS...IT'S JUST A KID, ISN'T IT?
GUYS, IT'S A SCARED, ANGRY KID--

YOU ARE CORRECT, JEN.
WHICH IS WHY I AM GOING TO NEGOTIATE WITH HER.
I MERELY NEED TO INITIATE A DIALOGUE.
SO.
HELLO.

CHILD.
I KNOW YOU ARE ANGRY.
I KNOW YOU ARE *AFRAID.*
BUT HURTING PEOPLE WILL NOT *CHANGE THAT.* I KNOW THAT MORE THAN *ANYONE.*
PLEASE, *TALK TO ME--*
OH, SHE HAS NOTHING TO SAY TO *YOU, QUEEN* OF *KILLERS.*
CASSANDRA NOVA!
THIS LITTLE ONE IS *SUCH* A PROMISING YOUNG MUTANT.
IT SIMPLY WOULDN'T *DO* TO HAVE *YOU* PUTTING YOUR *BLOODSTAINED FINGERPRINTS* ALL OVER HER PSYCHE, *WOULD* IT?
"HER MIND IS UNDER *MY* PROTECTION.
"AND I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO INFLUENCE HER... *SELF-ACTUALIZATION.*"

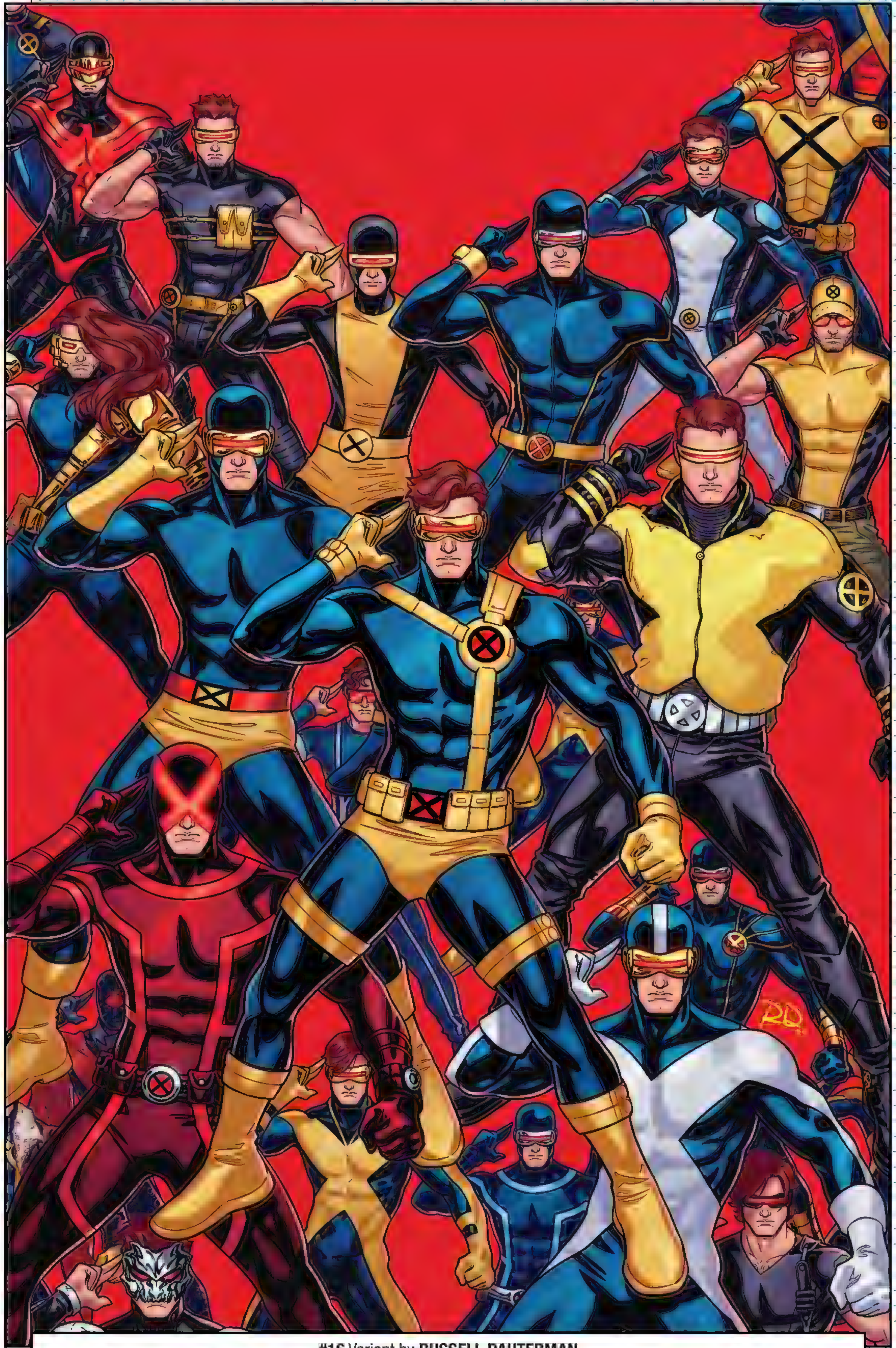
GOT YOU!
PLEASE.
LISTEN TO ME.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS.
YOU'RE A MUTANT.
YOU'RE A MUTANT. YOU'RE ONE OF US.
WE CAN HELP YOU. IT'S WHAT WE DO.
GIVE YOU A HOME FOR AS LONG AS YOU NEED ONE--
HE'S LYING.
BOOM
NO!
LIAR!

I'VE SEEN ENOUGH.
GOD KNOWS *I'M* NO STRANGER TO A *TEMPER TANTRUM*...
...BUT THIS IS AS FAR AS YOU GO.
"CLICK."
"BANG."

WYRE TO 3K.
X-MEN HAVE ENGAGED THE NEW RECRUIT.
HAVE THEY STOPPED HER?
FOR GOOD? NO. BUT THEY WILL UNLESS WE START THE FIELD TEST NOW.
YOU TRAINED THEM, WYRE.
CAN WE EXPECT A BETTER PERFORMANCE THAN WE SAW IN SANTO MARCO?
SANTO MARCO WAS A LONG TIME AGO, CHAIRMAN.
MY TEAM IS CHAMPING AT THE BIT AND READY TO GO.
YOU GIVE THE ENGAGE ORDER, AND THEY'LL DO YOU PROUD.
MY TEAM'LL EARN THEIR NAME.
DOCTOR?
I'M READY TO TELEPORT THEM. ON YOUR MARK, CHAIRMAN.
MARK.

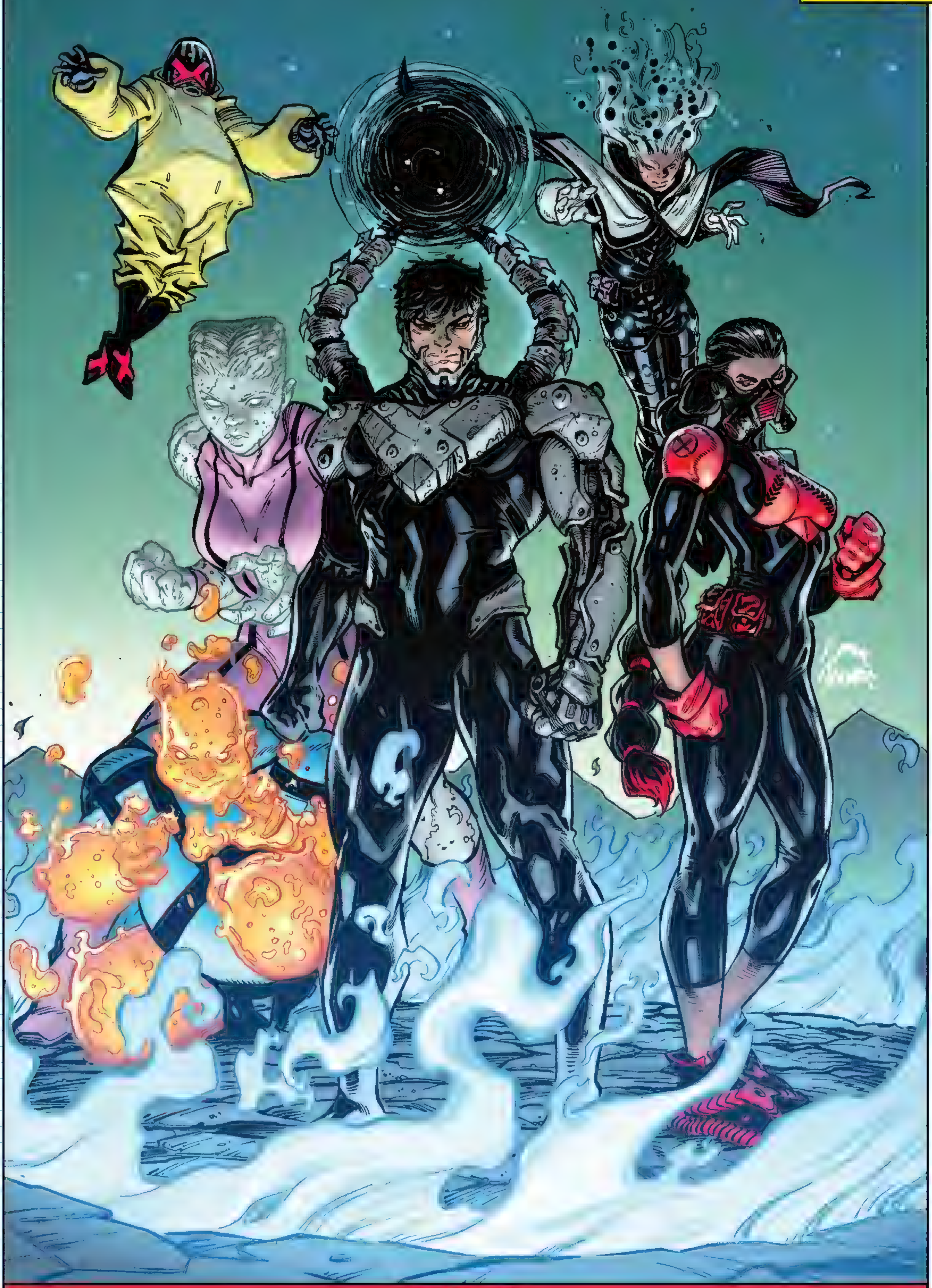
NO WAY--
YOU THINK...THAT...CAN STOP ME?
I BLEW RIGHT THROUGH HER. WHAT GIVES--?
SHE HAS TOTAL CONTROL OVER HER BIOLOGICAL STRUCTURE--SHE JUST HEALED HERSELF--
WHAT'S THE PLAN--?
SZPOKK
AAGGHH!!!
DAMN IT, WHO NOW--?

WHO DOES IT *LOOK* LIKE?
WE'RE THE
X-MEN.



#16 Variant by **RUSSELL DAUTERMAN**

#16



“X-MEN”

3K. THEN.
HOW'S THE ARM, CODENAME: SCHWARZSCHILD?
...WEIRD.
YOU COULDN'T HAVE REATTACHED MY REAL ARM? THE ONE THAT BLOND MANIAC CUT OFF?*
IF WE HAD IT IN HAND? NO PROBLEM.
*IN X-MEN (2024) #1! --TOM
BUT THEY TOOK IT WITH THEM, THESE "X-MEN."
THAT'S THE KIND OF ANIMALS THEY ARE.
DOING IT TO THEIR OWN, THE SAPIENS-LOVING RUNNING DOGS FOR THEIR FLATSCAN MASTERS.
WYRE, YOU'RE NOT A MUTANT.
YOU'RE A FLATSCAN.
WHY SHOULD WE LISTEN TO YOU?
BECAUSE, CODENAME: TIMEBOMB, MUTANT/FLATSCAN DOESN'T APPLY TO ME--I'M A PARTICULARLY SINGULAR MONSTER.
AND BECAUSE THE DOCTOR AND THE CHAIRMAN AND THE ZEALOT MAY HAVE MADE YOU INTO MUTANTS...
...BUT IT'S GOING TO BE ME WHO MAKES YOU INTO X-MEN.

NOW.
WE'RE THE X-MEN.
CONSTELLATION.
PSYCHOVORE.
SCHWARZSCHILD.
GALATEA.
TIMEBOMB.
JUICE.
OH YEAH?
SEEMS THERE'S A *LOT* OF THAT GOING AROUND.
BUT LET ME TELL YOU THIS:
MY NAME'S SCOTT SUMMERS. *CYCLOPS.*
IF THERE'S *ANY ONE PERSON* WHO'S QUALIFIED TO SAY WHO *IS* AND WHO *ISN'T* AN *X-MAN*...
...IT'S *ME.*
AND *YOU* DON'T MAKE THE *CUT.*

WHO *ARE* THEY?
THE *SANTO MARCO SIX.*
OH, *WORD?*
COME ON, CAIN!
LET'S GET ME THAT *OTHER* ARM--
--MAMA WANTS A *MATCHING SET!*
HAW HAW! C'MON, "X-MEN"--
--I'LL GRIND YOUR BONES TO MAKE MY *BREAD!*
MAGIK--
JUGGERNAUT, THE *TWIN*--

GO.
WHILE THEY'RE DISTRACTED.
WHO ARE THEY?
THEY'RE SO COLORFUL--
THEY'RE THE REAL X-MEN.
THE CHILDREN OF 3K, WHOM WE BUILT AND NURTURED.
AND WE WANT YOU TO BE ONE OF THEM.
BUT ONLY IF YOU PROVE YOURSELF.
CYCLOPS TO THE FACTORY--
--WE'VE GOT SIX HOSTILE MUTANTS ON-SITE. THE THREAT TO THE TOWN IS YOURS.

AH.
A 30-FOOT-TALL, 13-YEAR-OLD MUTANT MONSTER CHARGING THE TOWN WITH REVENGE ON HER MIND.
MAX, I DO BELIEVE YOU'RE UP.
I AM *VERY GOOD* WITH CHILDREN, HENRY.
YES, *YOURS* HAVE TURNED OUT *SO WELL.*
UNLESS YOU'D LIKE TO HONE YOUR *"TIGHT FIVE"* FURTHER, I BELIEVE YOU *HAVE* SOMETHING FOR ME.
I WISH YOU WEREN'T SO *EAGER* TO TEST *D-X.*
SOMETHING THAT CAN *RETURN* THE CONTROL OF MY POWER TO ME THAT R-LDS *STOLE?*
I CAN'T IMAGINE *WHY* I'D BE EAGER.
THE EFFECTS OF *DEXTROAMPHETAMINE-X* ARE *TEMPORARY,* MAX. AND *LIMITED,* WHICH IS WHY YOU'RE GOING OUT THERE *SUITED UP.*
ADD TO THAT WE HAVE ZERO UNDERSTANDING OF POSSIBLE FUTURE SIDE EFFECTS ON YOUR *BODY* OR *X-GENE,* AND IT IS NOTHING TO TAKE *CAVALIERLY.*
I *KNOW* ALL OF THIS, HENRY.
BUT, NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE I CAME TO ALASKA...

...I FEEL LIKE *MAGNETO.*
McCOY

"LET OUR ENEMIES *TREMBLE*."

YIKES!
WE'VE GOT AN *ACCELERATED PHYSIOLOGY* IN THE FIELD.
PSYLOCKE, LOCK HER *DOWN--*
UGHDD.
PLEASE.
NO ONE LOCKS *ME* DOWN.
ESPECIALLY NOT THE TEAM'S *SECOND-BANANA PSYCHIC.*
HOW DID YOU EVEN *RATE* A SPOT IN THIS GROUP, PSYLOCKE?
LET'S FIND OUT TOGETHER.

I'VE BEEN *WAITING* FOR THIS, MAGIK.
WAITING EVER SINCE LAST TIME...
...WHEN YOU *CUT MY ARM OFF!!!*
OH... I *REMEMBER*... IT...
I...*REMEMBER*... HOW YOU...THOUGHT... YOU COULD *PIN DOWN*... A...*TELEPORTER*...
HA!
YOU THINK I DIDN'T *LEARN ANYTHING* FROM THAT?
HERE.
LET'S *REVERSE* YOUR GRAVITY, SHALL WE?
SEE YOU IN ORBIT.
SCHWARZSCHILD!
HM?

SLINGSHOT MANEUVER!
AFFIRMATIVE, GALATEA.
LOW GRAV...
HOOO!
...AND THEN...
...HIGH GRAV.
I'LL PUT YOU IN THE GROUND FOR THAT--

LOOK UP, BIG MAN.
UH-OH--
TOOOM

HOW?!
I'M FASTER THAN YOU ARE.
HOW ARE YOU BLOCKING ME?
I CAN READ YOUR ACTIONS AS YOU THINK OF THEM.
I GUESS EVEN A SECOND-TIER PSYCHIC IS STILL A PSYCHIC.
WELL, I GOT SOMETHING FOR YOUR ASS.
PSYCHOVORE! SUPPORT!
HELLO.
DON'T MIND ME.
I'M GOING TO EAT YOUR THOUGHTS NOW.
GOT YOU NOW--

WHAK
AHHH!
ONE DOWN.
SO, YOU'RE MADE OF STONE?
STONE BREAKS, LADY.
EVERYTHIN' BREAKS, YOU DAMN FOOL.
'CEPT LIQUID.
JUICE!
HIYA.
FILL YER LUNGS WITH THAT, JUGGERNAUT!
THE JUICE IS LOOSE, BABY! THE JUICE IS LOOSE!
HANG ON, CAIN!

BREATHE DEEP!
KRKK
KRKKK
?
KRASHH
→GASP!←
YAAH!
SZPOK
ICE? AGAINST *COSMIC ENERGY?*
YOU X-MEN REALLY *ARE* DINOSAURS.
DINOSAURS?
I'M THE *METEOR,* WANNABE.

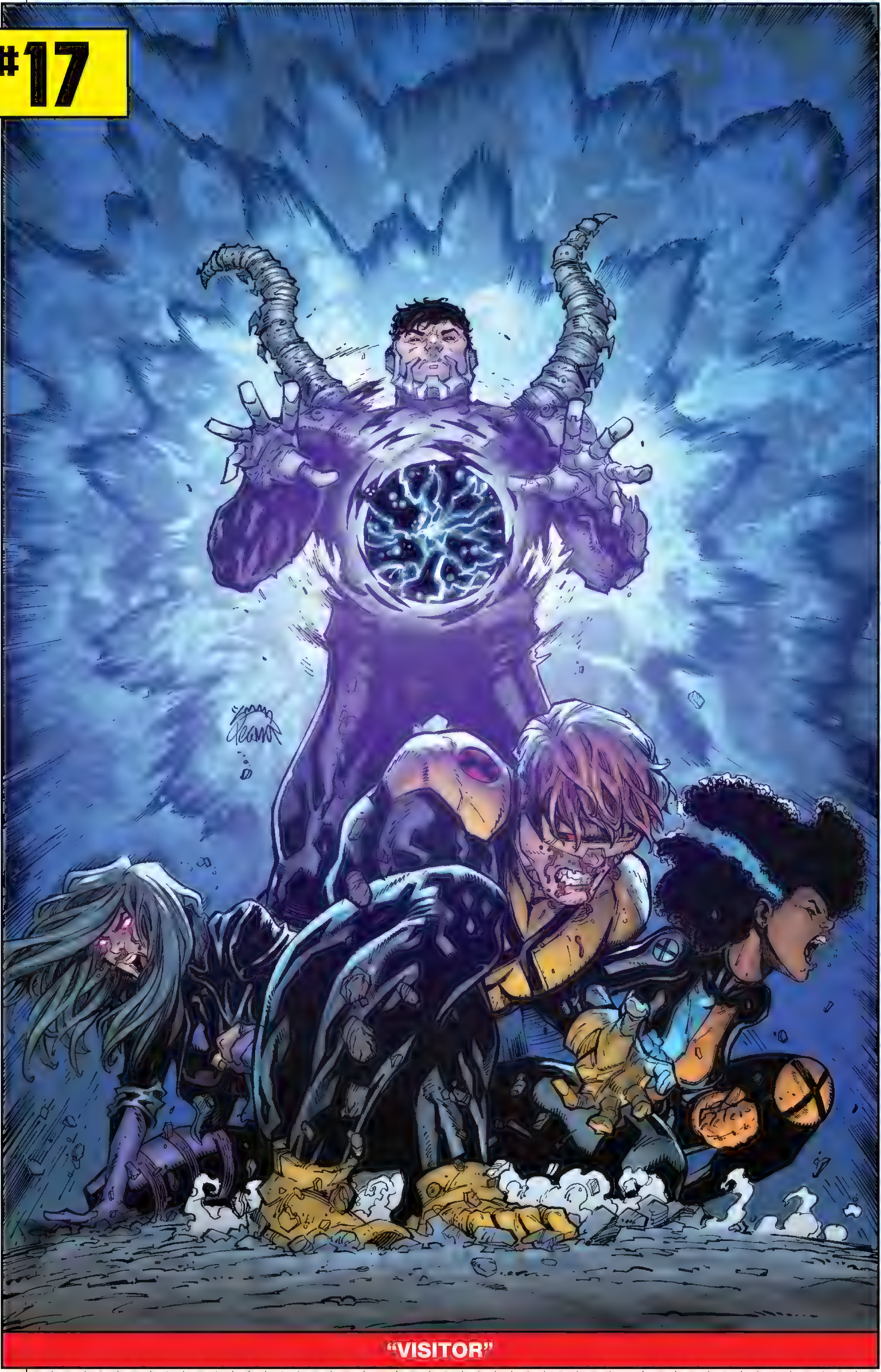
AND I AM *YOUR* EXTINCTION.
DAMN IT--
X-MEN!
REGROUP!

HEY, WHAT DID I MISS--?
OH.
THIS IS RIDICULOUS.
WHO SPEAKS FOR YOU?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
WHAT DO WE WANT?
TO BE X-MEN.
THE VANGUARD OF THE GENETIC REVOLUTION.
AND TO CALL OURSELVES X-MEN, WE HAVE TO EARN IT.
THIS IS A TEST, CYCLOPS.
WE'RE PROVING THAT WE'RE THE NEXT EVOLUTIONARY STEP, THAT YOU AND YOURS DON'T DESERVE THE NAME, WITH YOUR HALF MEASURES AND HYPOCRISY.
HERE COMES TOMORROW, SUMMERS. AND TOMORROW IS US.

I DON'T THINK I GET IT.
IT IS QUITE SIMPLE, MR. HERMAN.
"GLOB" IS FINE.
IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, I'LL STICK WITH "MR. HERMAN."
"THE WILD SENTINEL LOOMING OVER MERLE WAS *USEFUL* TO US, AS A REMINDER TO THE TOWN THAT IT HAD BEEN SAVED BY THE X-MEN."
BUT IT ALSO PRESENTED A HAZARD.
YOU CAN'T JUST *LEAVE* A GIANT ROBOT-SLASH-GENOCIDE-PLATFORM *STANDING AROUND.*
IF IT *FELL OVER...* THE VERY THOUGHT!
"NO, IT BECAME VERY APPARENT THAT IF ONE WISHED TO *MOVE* A SENTINEL...
"...THE *EASIEST WAY* TO *DO* IT IS TO MAKE IT *WALK.*

"AND IT WAS MAGNETO WHO POINTED OUT THAT IF HE COULD MAKE THE SENTINEL WALK...
"...HE COULD MAKE IT FIGHT."

#17



“VISITOR”

3K.
WELL?
HOW ARE THEY, WYRE?
"HOW ARE THEY?"
THEY'RE WHAT YOU **MADE** THEM TO BE.
WHAT I **TRAINED** THEM TO BE.
ALASKA.
A MOB OF **HARDCASE MUTIES.**
LIFE-TAKERS AND HEARTBREAKERS.
IN **SHORT,** MISTER CHAIRMAN?

"THEY'RE *X-MEN.*"
ON ME, X-MEN!
WE'RE GOING TO CLEAR THE TABLE!

DRONE FOOTAGE SHOULD SUFFICE FROM HERE ON OUT.
I'M MOVING: WE'VE GOT CASSANDRA NOVA'S PRODIGY TO EVALUATE.
COMPARING MY 13-YEAR-OLD GIRL TO YOUR ADULT, EX-S.H.I.E.L.D. X-MEN, WYRE?
I LIKE MY ODDS.
YOU TAKE IN STRAYS, NOVA. I BUILD KILLERS.
I'VE DONE IT MY WHOLE LIFE.
AND THERE'S NO ONE BETTER AT IT THAN I AM.
WHICH IS WHY YOU LET ME INTO YOUR LITTLE X-GENE-POSITIVE CLUB.
LISTEN TO ME, WYRE.
YOU WERE OUR SECOND CHOICE.
THE ONLY REASON YOU HAVE ANY VALUE, ANY VALUE AT ALL...
...IS BECAUSE VICTOR CREED IS DEAD.
I KILLED ONE X-MAN FOR YOU ALREADY, NOVA, AND THIS IS THE THANKS I GET?
AFTER ALL, EVEN YOUR PRECIOUS SABRETOOTH...

"...COULDN'T SHUT QUENTIN QUIRE UP FOR GOOD."
THEN.
SLOW IT DOWN SLOW IT DOWN SLOW DOWN SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE--
--SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF TIME SLOWED TO 15 PERCENT, ESTIMATED TIME UNTIL UNCONSCIOUSNESS 3.7 SECONDS OBJECTIVE TIME, TERMINAL VELOCITY ACHIEVED--
--INITIALIZING AUTONOMOUS TELEKINETIC FAIL-SAFE MACRO, INSTRUCTION: LIFE SUPPORT/IMPACT ABSORPTION/SELF-SUSTAIN UNTIL USER CONSCIOUSNESS IS RE-ESTABLISHED/ INTERDICTION FROM AUTHORIZED ALLIES:
CYCLOPS/PSYLOCKE/ TEMPER/PHOEBE CUCKOO/ MAGNETO/BEAST/MAGIK/ JUGGERNAUT/GLOB--

NOW.
"--XORN."
I CAN'T *FEEL* YOUR DEATH *ANYWHERE,* QUENTIN.
SO YOU *MUST* BE--
AH.
THERE YOU ARE.
I DON'T KNOW *HOW* YOU MAINTAINED A *TELEKINETIC SHIELD* WHILE *UNCONSCIOUS...*
...BUT I SUPPOSE YOU CAN TELL ME WHEN YOU WAKE UP AT HOME.

"ASSUMING THAT WE STILL *HAVE* A HOME TO GO TO."
DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM, CHILD?

I AM MAGNETO.
HAVE THE OTHERS TRIED TO GIVE YOU A SPEECH?
YES.
AND DID YOU LISTEN?
NO.
AS I SAID, I AM MAGNETO.
AND I DO NOT GIVE SPEECHES.

I LIKE THAT.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT.
NOW LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT A **REAL** MUTANT MENACE LOOKS LIKE.

OOF.
MAGNETO JUST LAID A BEATING ON YOUR GIRL, NOVA.
IS HE DRIVING A WILD SENTINEL?!
CALM YOURSELF, CASSANDRA.
THIS IS A SMALL GIFT FROM SCOTT'S X-MEN.
THE X-MEN, SO-CALLED DEFENDERS OF MUTANTKIND, USING A SENTINEL?
THE PROPAGANDA WRITES ITSELF.
NOVA'S NEWBORN MONSTER, WYRE'S X-MEN...
...I DON'T KNOW WHY WE DIDN'T JUST SEND MY BABY TO ROLL UP THE X-MEN QUICK-SHARP AND KNOCK OFF ALL THIS PLAYING AROUND.
JOSEPH...THREE? FOUR? WITH YOUR PREDILECTION FOR CLONES, I CAN NEVER QUITE KEEP TRACK.
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK.
AHEM.
REGARDLESS, ASTRA, YOUR ENDLESS SERIES OF MAGNETO CLONES IS A DEAD END, PHILOSOPHICALLY.
OUR ONGOING PROJECT IS NOT TO SUPPLANT HUMANITY WITH CLONES OF ONE MAX EISENHARDT, BUT TO CHANGE THEM.

"TO *TAKE COMMAND* OF EVOLUTION, PROPEL IT *FORWARD* UNDER OUR OWN TERMS.
BOOM
"TO *CORRECT* NATURE'S MISTAKE IN FAVORING THE *FLATSCANS*--
CHUNK
"--FOR WHAT *ELSE* COULD IT BE CALLED, GIVEN HER GENEROSITY TO *THEM* AND HER MISERLINESS TOWARD *US*--
"--AND *RECTIFY* THE *RANDOMNESS* WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN *SO* AT THE MERCY OF IN INCREASING OUR NUMBER."
WHUNCH
SO YOU'VE *TOLD* US, TIME AND TIME AGAIN, CHAIRMAN.
I *STILL* SAY WE SHOULD FOCUS OUR RESOURCES ON MAKING AN *ARMY* OF *JOSEPHS* AND FLIP THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC POLES.
IT'S A CLASSIC FOR A REASON.

ABSOLUTELY NOT.
THE BALANCE OF POWER WITHIN OUR ORGANIZATION IS A *FRAGILE* ONE. WHICH IS WHY THE CHARTER WE AGREED UPON *EXPRESSLY FORBIDS* ASSEMBLING *CLONE ARMIES.*
I WOULDN'T TRUST *YOUR JOSEPHS* ANY MORE THAN YOU WOULD TRUST *MY* CLONE TROOPS.
THERE IS A REASON WHY *NATHANIEL ESSEX* WAS *NOT* INVITED TO JOIN THIS GROUP.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, I *GET IT.*
GOD, I THOUGHT BEING A *GENETIC TERRORIST* WOULD BE MORE OF A *LAUGH.*
SPEAK FOR *YOURSELF,* DOC.
"I'M HAVING A *BALL.*"
KRA-SHUNK

"MAGNETO."
I THOUGHT YOU USED TO BE SOMEONE.
TOSS
BUT LOOK AT YOU NOW.
USING A SENTINEL AS A CRUTCH.
FIGHTING A MUTANT TO PROTECT FLATSCANS.
WHAT HAPPENED?
I LOST MY APPETITE FOR BLOOD.
I THOUGHT THAT IF I KILLED ENOUGH OF THEM, HURT ENOUGH OF THEM, THEY WOULD UNDERSTAND. THAT THEY WOULD COMPLY. THAT THEY WOULD ACQUIESCE.
BUT DRINKING BLOOD ONLY LEAVES YOU SICK.
I EMBRACE VIOLENCE. I ALWAYS HAVE.
IT IS A NECESSITY FOR PEOPLE LIKE US.
BUT VIOLENCE WITHOUT DIRECTION IS POINTLESS.
A TANTRUM.

I...
I...
I THOUGHT MAGNETO DIDN'T *GIVE* SPEECHES.
WHAM
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T *GIVE* SPEECHES!
DAMN IT--

SHE CAN'T BEAT HIM.
HE'S MAGNETO, FOR GOD'S SAKE.
UNFORTUNATELY, MAGNETO ISN'T EXACTLY MAGNETO THESE DAYS, BEN. IF HE FULLY UTILIZED HIS POWERS, HE'D BE IN DANGER OF WIPING OUT THE WHOLE TOWN.
SHE'S GOING TO KILL HIM, ISN'T SHE?
I...
I HAVE THE UTMOST FAITH IN MAX.
HE'S TERRORIZED ME SINCE I WAS A TEENAGER. HE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE--
HE'S SICK, HANK!
YOU GOT HIM FIRED UP ON DEXTROAMPHETAMINE-X AND SENT HIM OUT IN A HOOPTIE-ASS SENTINEL TO FIGHT A GIANT MONSTER!
SCREW THIS.
YOU CAN SIT ON YOUR HANDS IF YOU LIKE, BUT I'M GOING TO DO SOMETHING.
JEN, WHERE ARE YOU? I NEED YOU--
BEN!
BEN, YOU CAN'T USE YOUR POWERS!
YOU'LL ONLY MAKE IT WORSE!

SOMETHING I'VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD, CYCLOPS.
HOW DOES SOMEONE WITH A *PISS-POOR MUTANT POWER* LIKE YOURS END UP RUNNING THE X-MEN?
IT'S *NOTHING* COMPARED TO YOUR *GRAVIMETRIC* POWERS, SCHWARZSCHILD...
ZAK
...BUT I MAKE IT WORK.
CAIN!
HAKK KOFF
DIRTY *TRICK--*
YOU THOUGHT *THAT* WAS DIRTY?
THEN YOU'RE GOING TO HATE *THIS* ONE.

SCHWARZSCHILD!
NO!
THUNK
THAT'S A COMMON MISCONCEPTION-- THAT THE *MOST POWERFUL* AMONG US ARE THE *LEADERS.*
I *GET* WHERE IT COMES FROM. I DO.
BUT MY *MUTANT POWER* HAS *NEVER* BEEN THE REASON THAT I'M DANGEROUS.
IT'S BECAUSE I CAN SET UP A *BATTLEFIELD* LIKE A *POOL TABLE.*
WITH EVERYTHING IN *JUST THE RIGHT PLACE...*
...SO THAT WHEN YOU SINK THE *FIRST BALL...*
...THE REST *FOLLOW.*

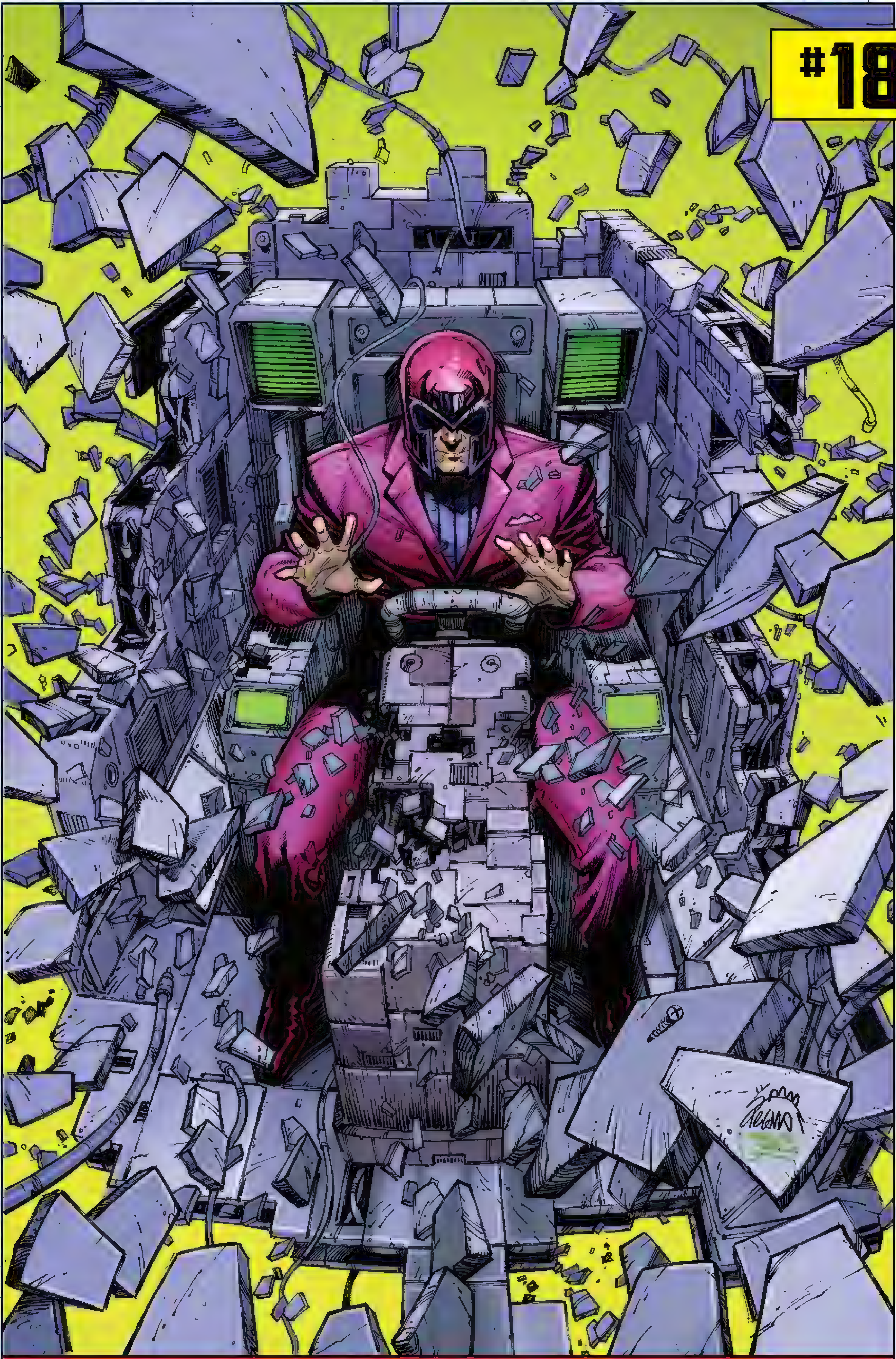
YOU'VE BEEN TRAINED WELL, "X-MEN."
BUT ALL YOUR TACTICS GO THROUGH YOUR *LEADER.*
WHAT'S *LEFT* WHEN HE'S *TAKEN DOWN?*
LET'S FIND OUT.

THE COBB RESIDENCE.
DAMN IT, PIPER, *WHERE ARE YOU?!*
GIANT MONSTERS AND ROBOTS, WHERE DID YOU *GO?!*
WHAT?
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
ROSE ELLEN COBB!
OPEN UP!
PIPER!
PIPER, IS THAT--?
OH MY *GOD--*
CHK

ROSE ELLEN COBB?
MY NAME'S BEN LIU, AND THIS IS JENNIFER STARKEY.
MY FRIEND IS GOING TO DIE UNLESS WE GET YOUR HELP.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN *STOP* THIS.
HI, MOM.

THE FACTORY.
I'VE SEEN NICER BASES.
NO, NO RESISTANCE.
WE SPREAD THEM TOO THIN.
THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW I'M HERE.
ANYWAY.
OBJECTIVE THREE IN EFFECT: MAKING A HOUSE CALL.

#18



“INVITATION”

THE FACTORY. MERLE, ALASKA.
DAMN IT--
--WE HAVE TEENAGE GIANT MONSTERS AND THE INEXPLICABLE X-MEN TO DEAL WITH...
NOW, DR. McCOY...
...I WORKED AWFUL HARD TURNING THOSE BOYS AND GIRLS INTO X-MEN, AND I DON'T APPRECIATE YOUR TONE.
WHO--?
3K'S COME CALLING, DOCTOR. AND IT FALLS TO ME, AS THE MEANS, TO DO THE KNOCKING.
BUT YOU CAN CALL ME WYRE.
AND I'VE COME A LONG WAY TO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT WITH YOU, DR. McCOY.

OUTSIDE OF MERLE, ALASKA.
YOUR LEADER'S FINISHED.
THIS IS THE PART WHERE YOU SURRENDER, "X-MEN."
SCHWARZSCHILD'S *DOWN*--
--WHAT DO WE *DO?*
SHUT *UP*, JUICE. I'VE *GOT* THIS.
THIS IS A *TEST*, REMEMBER?
THAT'S RIGHT.
AND AIN'T *NO WAY* A *SURRENDER* IS GOIN' ON *MY* REPORT CARD.
STEADY ON, GALATEA.
YOU KNOW THE PROTOCOL.
TIMEBOMB IS *CAPTAIN* AFTER SCHWARZSCHILD.

THE *THING* ABOUT THAT, CONSTELLATION--
--I DON'T LISTEN TO *NOBODY* BUT *SCHWARZSCHILD.*
PSYCHOVORE?
I'LL BACK YOUR PLAY, GAL.
ARE YOU *KIDDING* ME RIGHT NOW?
GALATEA, PSYCHOVORE, *GET IN LINE--*
ARE WE GOING TO *HIT THEM* OR *WHAT?*
THEY'RE IN A MOMENT OF LEADERSHIP CRISIS, MAGIK. A *THREAT* WILL *UNIFY* THEM.
"WHEN YOUR ENEMY IS MAKING A *MISTAKE...*
"...*LET* THEM."
...YOU THINK BECAUSE YOU WAS *A.I.M.* BEFORE YOU'RE *BETTER* THAN ME--
WE DON'T HAVE *TIME* FOR THIS, YOU *STUPID S.H.I.E.L.D. DOOR-KICKER--*

WHAT ARE THEY *TALKING* ABOUT?
THEY USED TO BE *ORCHIS,* TEMPER, AND *HALF* OF ORCHIS CAME FROM *A.I.M.* AND *S.H.I.E.L.D.*
OLD RIVALRIES.
GAL, PSYCHO, THIS IS *NOT* THE *TIME--*
WHAT ARE WE *WAITIN'* *FOR,* CYCLOPS--?
YOU WERE *S.T.R.I.K.E.,* LIMEY. YOU DON'T HAVE A *DOG* IN THIS *FIGHT--*
"I LED A TEAM WITH *WOLVERINE* ON IT FOR *YEARS,* JUGGERNAUT.
GUYS, DON'T, WE GOTTA STICK TOGETHER--
"I *KNOW* WHAT THIS IS--HOW IT *ENDS.*
"WE JUST HAVE TO *WAIT...*
THIS IS AN *EVALUATION,* AND YOU ARE *BLOWING IT, MORON!*
THAT...

"…FOR IT TO *PLAY OUT.*"
…IS THE LAST TIME YOU CALL ME DUMB!
THERE IT IS.
AND IT'S A *LOT MORE FUN* WHEN IT *ISN'T* HAPPENING TO *ME.*
TAKE THEM *DOWN,* X-MEN.

MERLE, ALASKA.
"MAGNETO."
WHAT A JOKE.
HENRY, DO YOU HAVE A *PLAN?*
BECAUSE MY OPTIONS ARE BECOMING *SEVERELY LIMITED.*
JUST ANOTHER *OLD MAN--*
HEY!
LEAVE HIM *ALONE!*
OH?
WHY *SHOULD I?*
BECAUSE *I* HAVE WHO YOU *REALLY* WANT TO KILL.
ROSE ELLEN COBB.
YOUR MOTHER.

M-MOM?
I--
--I CAN'T DO THIS--
WOMAN, I AM NOT DYING BECAUSE YOU LISTENED TO TOO MANY PODCASTS--
LOOK, I GET IT!
YOU GOT A ROUGH DEAL!
BUT WE ALL DID!
I WAS TORTURED AND EXPERIMENTED ON UNTIL MY BRAIN BROKE.
BUT THE X-MEN SAVED ME.
STOPPED ME FROM HURTING ANYONE. PUT MY MIND BACK TOGETHER.
AND THEY CAN DO THE SAME FOR YOU.
"ROUGH DEAL"?!
YOU HAD A NAME!
YOU HAD A LIFE!
YOU HAD A BODY!
SURE.
AND WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW THAT YOU'VE GOT ONE?
MURDER PEOPLE.
GROW UP, FOR GOD'S SAKE.

YOU'LL GET NOTHING FROM ME.
YOU THINK THAT'S WHY I'M HERE?
FOR INFORMATION?
YOU WOUND ME.
I HAVE INFORMATION FOR YOU: A MESSAGE.
AND WHAT MESSAGE WOULD THAT BE?
THAT YOU'RE WASTED HERE.
THAT THE BEAST DOESN'T BELONG WITH THE X-MEN. HE BELONGS WITH US.
I'M HERE TO EXTEND AN INVITATION, DR. McCOY.
AN INVITATION TO JOIN 3K.

"I MAY HAVE HAD A *CRISIS* OF *FAITH* SOME YEARS BACK,* BUT OTHER THAN *THAT,* I'VE *ALWAYS* KNOWN WHAT I SHOULD BE.
*SEE ALPHA FLIGHT #114! --TOM
"A *MONSTER.*
"I THINK *YOU* AND *I* HAVE THAT IN *COMMON.*
"BECAUSE YOU'RE *LUCKY:*
"YOU *KNOW FOR A FACT* WHAT YOU CAN *BE.*
"IT'S ALREADY *HAPPENED* ONCE."

YOUR POTENTIAL HAS ALREADY BEEN MAPPED, DR. McCOY.
AND WE THINK WE CAN HELP YOU MAKE THE MOST OF IT.
GET YOUR THINGS, BEAST.
WE'RE GOING TO DO SUCH GREAT WORK TOGETHER.
NO!

YOU GET AWAY FROM HIM!
YAAAHHH!!

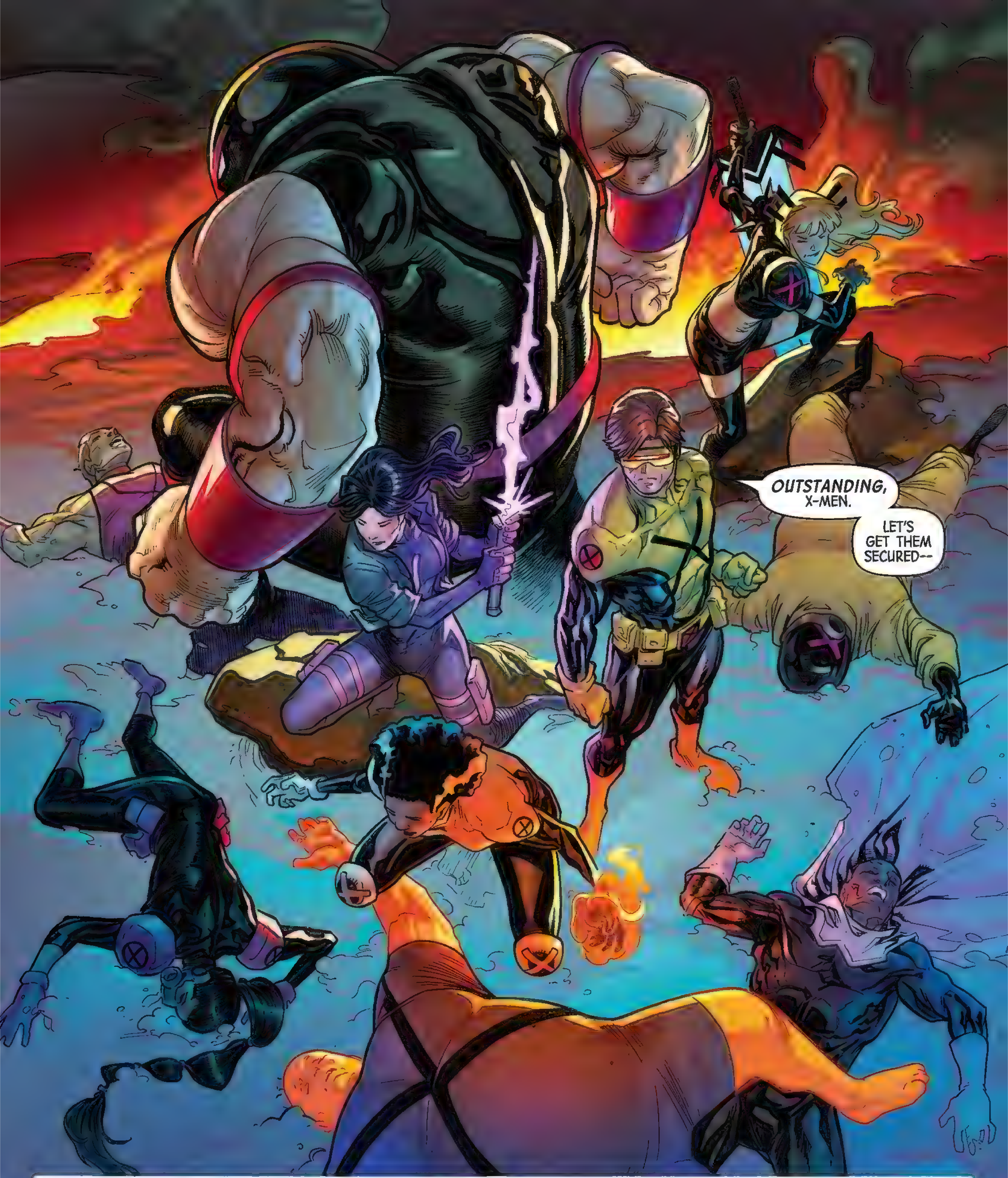
"GROW UP"?
HOW *DARE* YOU--?
GO ON, THEN.
KILL HER.
KILL YOUR *MUTANT-HATING MOTHER.*
PROVE HER *RIGHT.*
I--
--I--
PROVE THAT YOU--*WE*--ARE *EXACTLY* WHAT THEY *SAY* WE ARE.
MAKE HER A *SYMBOL* FOR *GENE NATION.* FOR THE *SAPIEN LEAGUE.* TURN HER INTO A *THOUSAND VIDEO THUMBNAILS.*
THE *MOTHER* MURDERED BY HER *OWN MUTANT CHILD.*
THEY'LL *LOVE* THAT. YOU'LL HAVE DONE THEM THE *BIGGEST FAVOR* SINCE *BOLIVAR TRASK.*

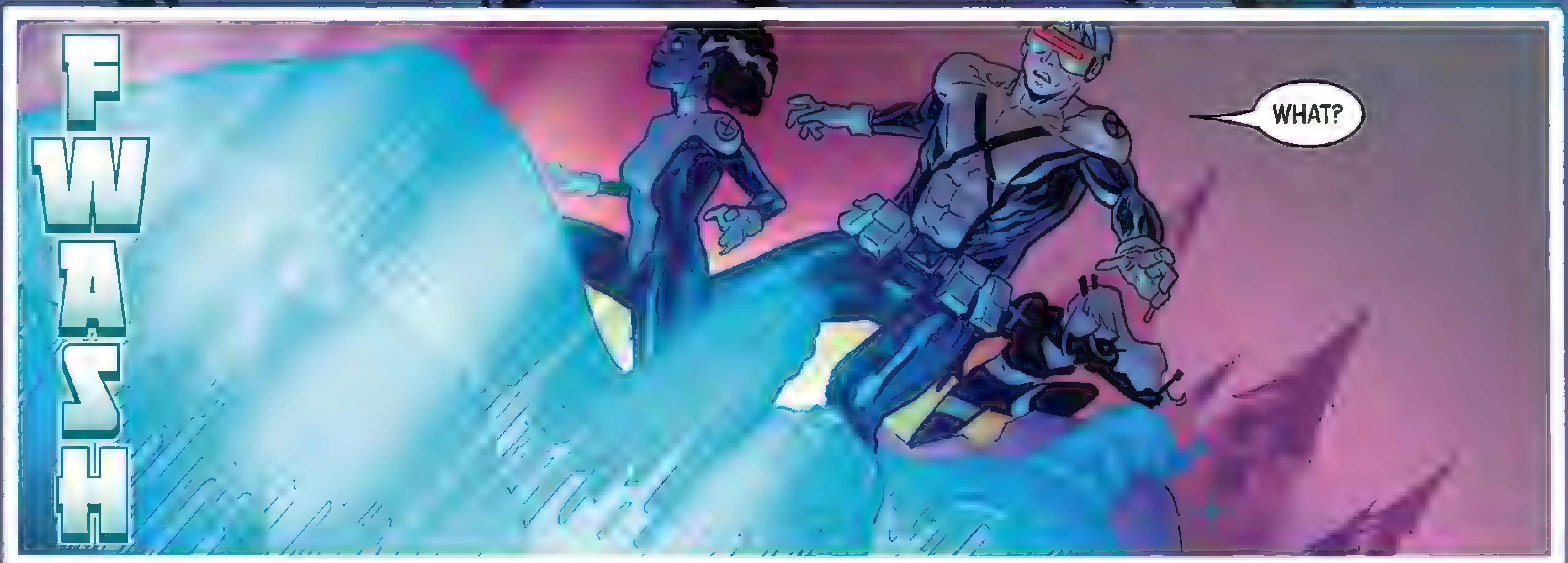
PLEASE.
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE *IN* THERE. IN *PIPER.*
I'M...I'M SORRY THAT I WASN'T *THERE* FOR YOU.
WHEN THE DOCTOR TOLD ME I WAS GOING TO HAVE *TWINS,* I WAS SO *EXCITED.*
AND THEN YOU *DISAPPEARED,* AND THE DOCTOR SAID IT WAS *NORMAL.*
AND I GOT SO *SCARED.*
BECAUSE ALL OF A SUDDEN, I WENT FROM *TWO* KIDS TO *ONE,* JUST LIKE *THAT,* BEFORE ANY WERE EVEN *BORN.*
THE WORLD CAN JUST *DO* THAT.
THE WORLD CAN JUST DO THAT AND IT'S *NORMAL.*
THE WORLD CAN JUST TAKE YOUR KID AWAY.
MAKE THEM *DISAPPEAR.*
AND ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT WAS PROTECTING THE ONE I HAD *LEFT.*
I GOT SO SCARED OF *EVERYTHING.*
AND WHEN THEY STARTED TALKING ABOUT THE *"MUTANT PLAGUE"...*
...I GOT SCARED OF *THAT.*

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH...
...I'M SORRY.
I WANTED YOU BOTH. YOU AND PIPER.
...I WAS GOING TO NAME YOU ROBIN.
A NAME.
THEY'RE LYING TO YOU!
THEY'RE PLAYING YOU FOR A FOOL!
I HAVE A NAME.
A NAME...
...OF MY OWN.

WELL, *LOOK* WHO IT *IS.*
ONE OF OUR LITTLE *EXPERIMENTS,* SPREADING HER *WINGS.*
COMING TO THE DEFENSE OF THE BIG BLUE *BEAST.*
STOP IT!
I'LL GO WITH YOU.
WHATEVER YOU *WANT,* I'LL *DO* IT.
HANK, NO, YOU *CAN'T--*
JUST...
...JUST DON'T *HURT HER.*
PLEASE.
OH, DR. McCOY...

...YOU FUNDAMENTALLY *MISUNDERSTAND* WHAT'S *HAPPENING* HERE.
WE'RE NOT SOME *SAD MOB* OF *BLACKMAILERS.*
WE'RE THE *FUTURE.*
YOUR INVITATION IS AN *HONOR,* NOT A *THREAT.*
AND IT *STANDS.*
YOU'RE NOT *READY* YET. THAT'S OKAY.
BUT YOU'RE GOING TO COME TO REALIZE WHO YOU *REALLY* ARE *VERY* SOON.
AND WHEN *THAT TIME COMES...*
...YOU GET IN *TOUCH.*
MEANS TO THE *DOCTOR:*
TESTING HAS *CONCLUDED,* ALL OBJECTIVES MET.
BRING US ALL HOME.
FWASH

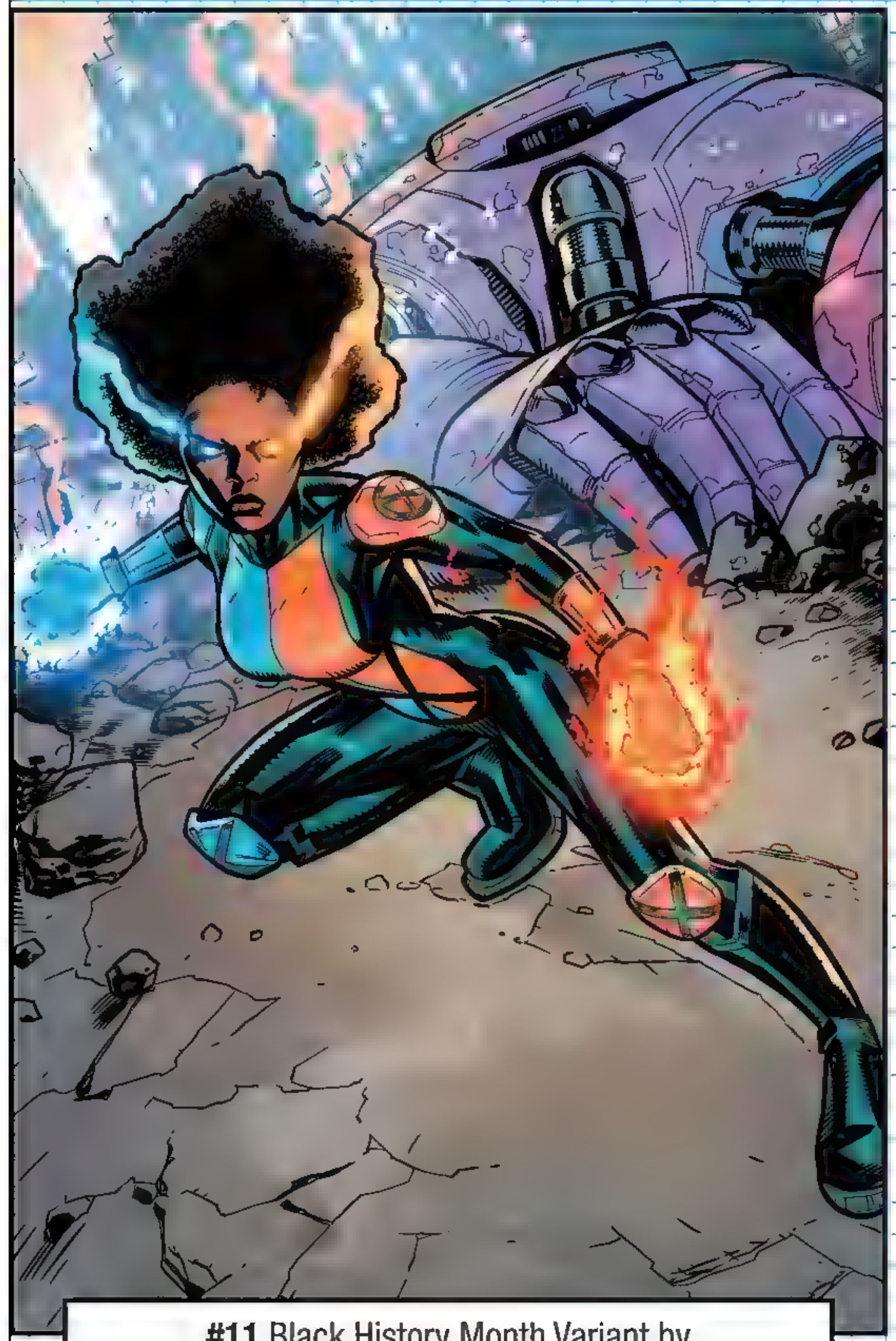

OUTSTANDING, X-MEN.
LET'S GET THEM SECURED--


FWASH
WHAT?

YOU ARE BEING FOOLISH.
SOME CROCODILE TEARS AND HIGH-MINDED SENTIMENT AND YOU FORGET YOUR PURPOSE?
YOU WILL NEVER BE ANYTHING BUT A MONSTER TO THEM!
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT YOUR "MOTHER" HAS SEEN THE ERROR OF HER WAYS?
DO YOU REALLY THINK THESE "X-MEN" WILL FORGIVE YOU FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE ALREADY DONE?
I HAVE A NAME.
ROBIN COBB.
SUCH PALTRY COIN THAT YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE BOUGHT WITH.
PERHAPS YOU'VE FORGIVEN YOUR MOTHER FOR HER FEAR. PERHAPS YOU'VE FORGIVEN THE X-MEN FOR THEIR BASELESS ATTACKS UPON YOU.
BUT CAN YOU FORGIVE HER?
SHE TOOK EVERYTHING FROM YOU IN THE WOMB.
IMPRISONED YOU IN HER OWN FLESH.
CAN YOU FORGIVE YOUR SISTER?

NO.
NO, I CAN'T, I *CAN'T*--
NO.
YOU CAN'T.
AND YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO.
ZEALOT TO THE DOCTOR: I THINK WE'RE READY TO COME HOME.
KID, *DON'T*--
ROBIN!
FWASH
ROBIN!

CYCLOPS TO **ALL POINTS.**
MUTANT OPPOSITION GONE, TELE-EVAC. NO CASUALTIES. ALL POINTS, STATUS.
BEAST TO THE **X-MEN.**
WE HAD A **BASE INTRUSION.** NO CASUALTIES. I THINK.
HEY, IT'S, UH, BEN.
KID'S GONE, TELEPORTED OR SOMETHING.
WE'RE ALL OKAY THOUGH. I'M JUST GETTING MAGNETO OUT OF THE WRECKED SENTINEL.
CYCLOPS TO BEAST--**BASE INTRUSION?** ARE YOU **ALL RIGHT,** HANK?
OH, I'M FINE, SCOTT.
JUST PEACHY.
3K



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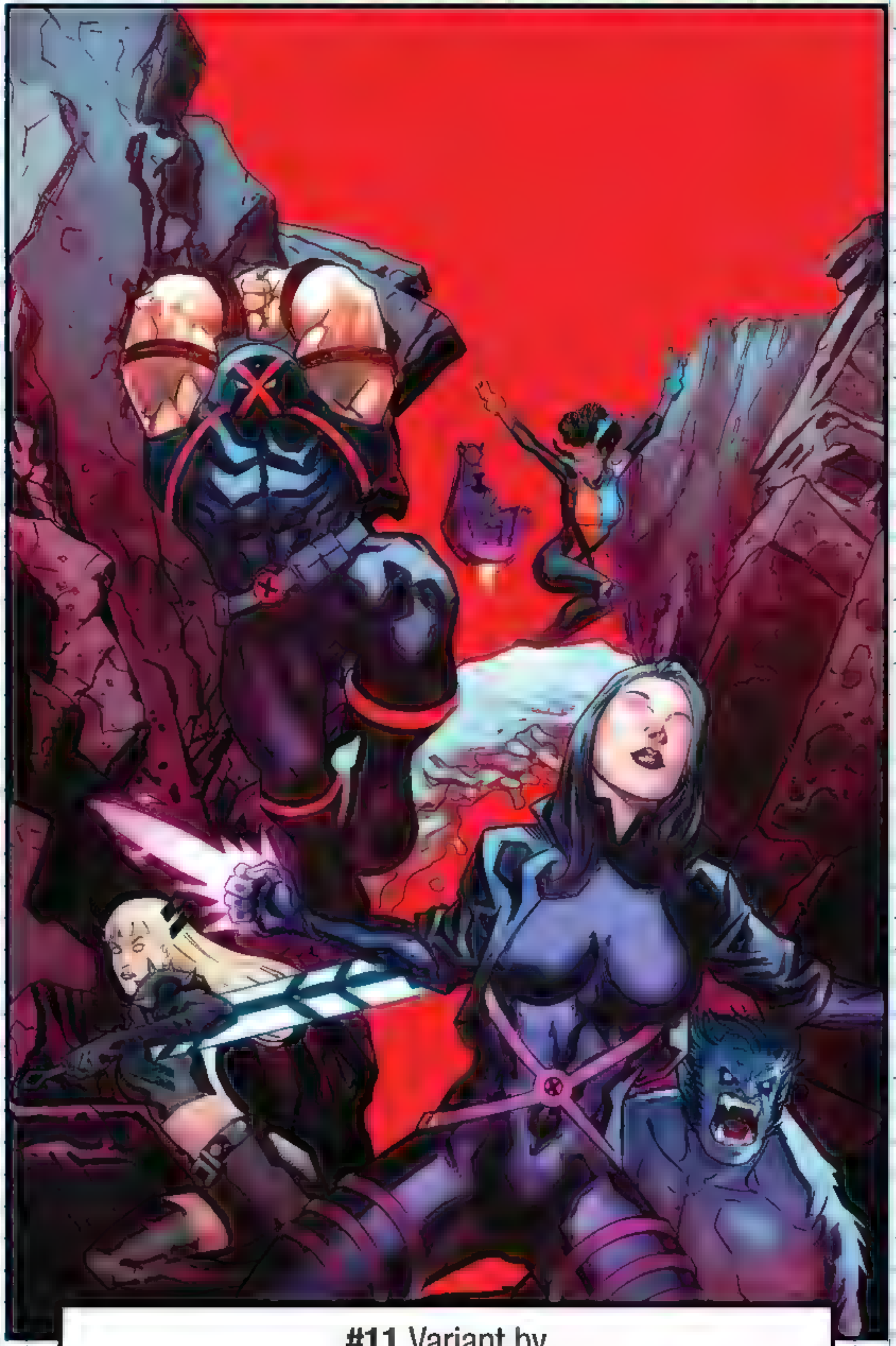

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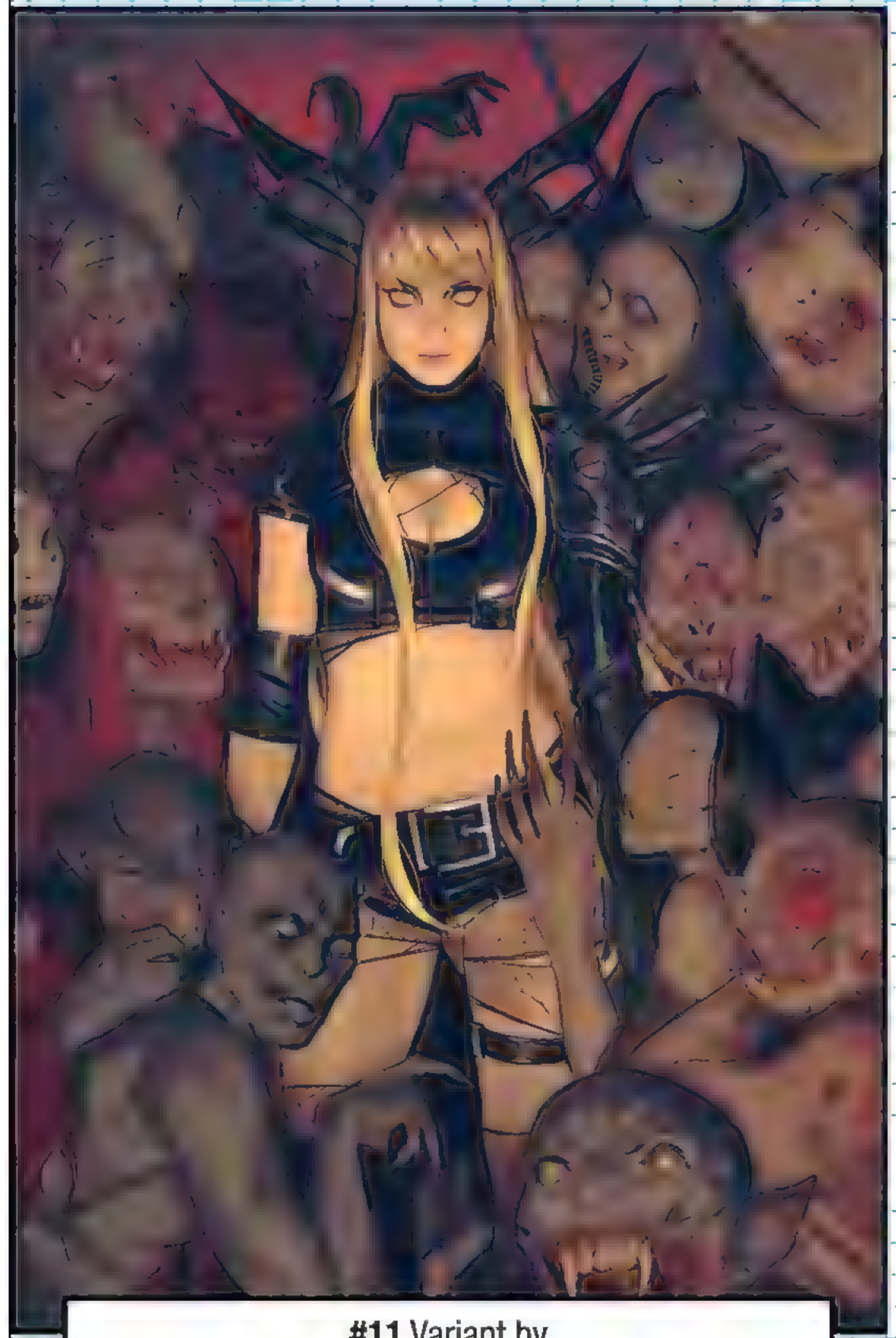

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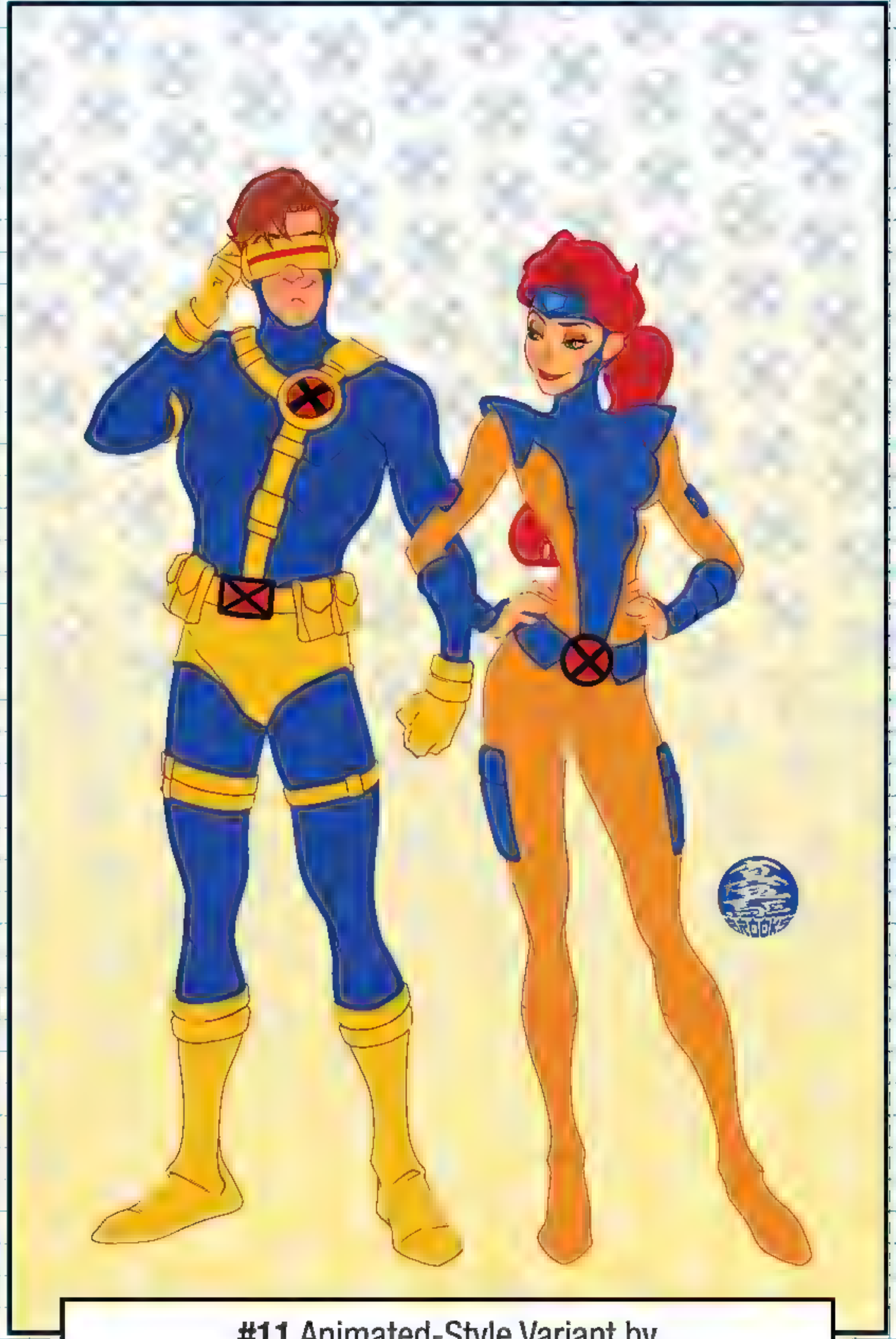

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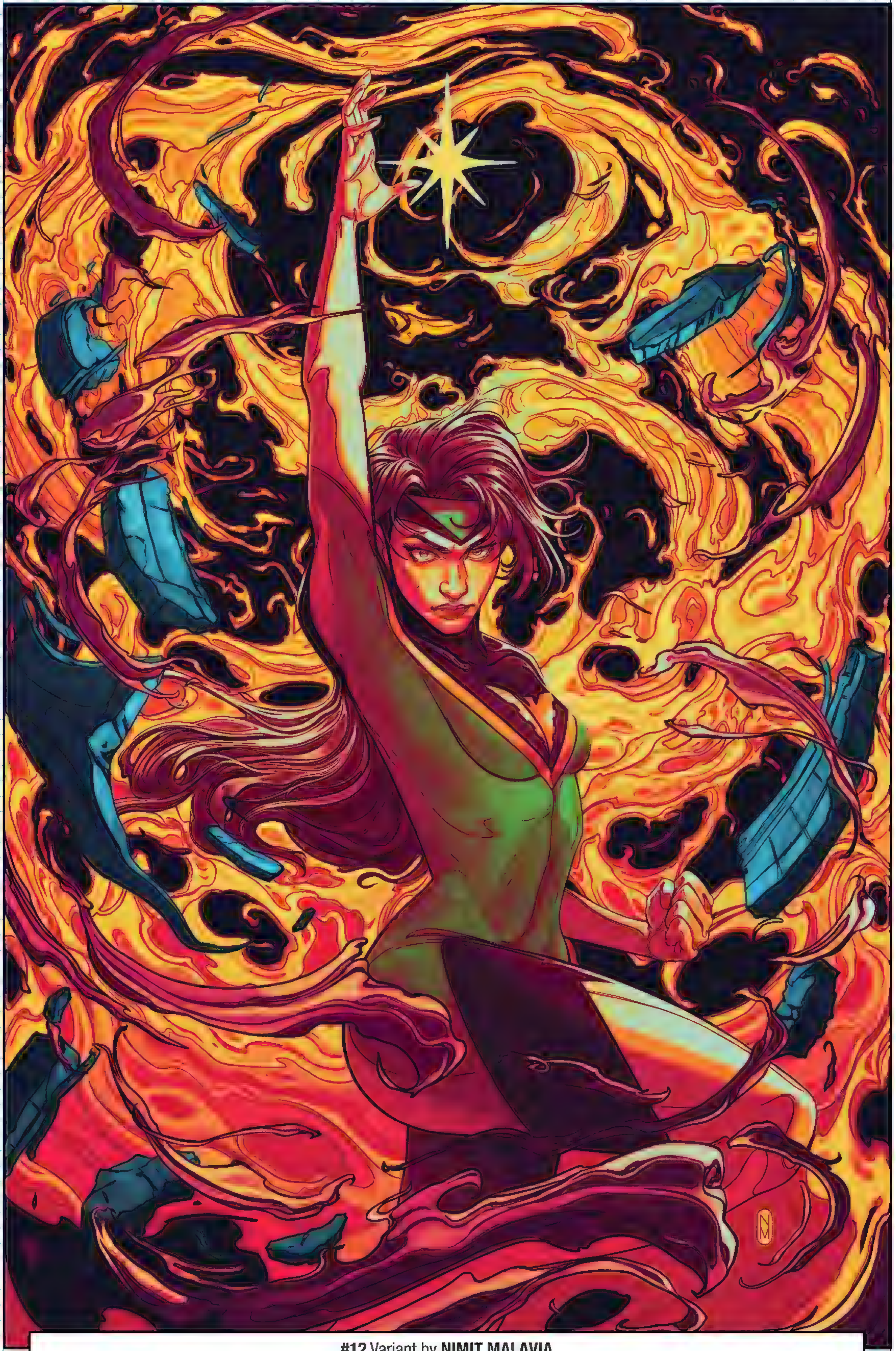

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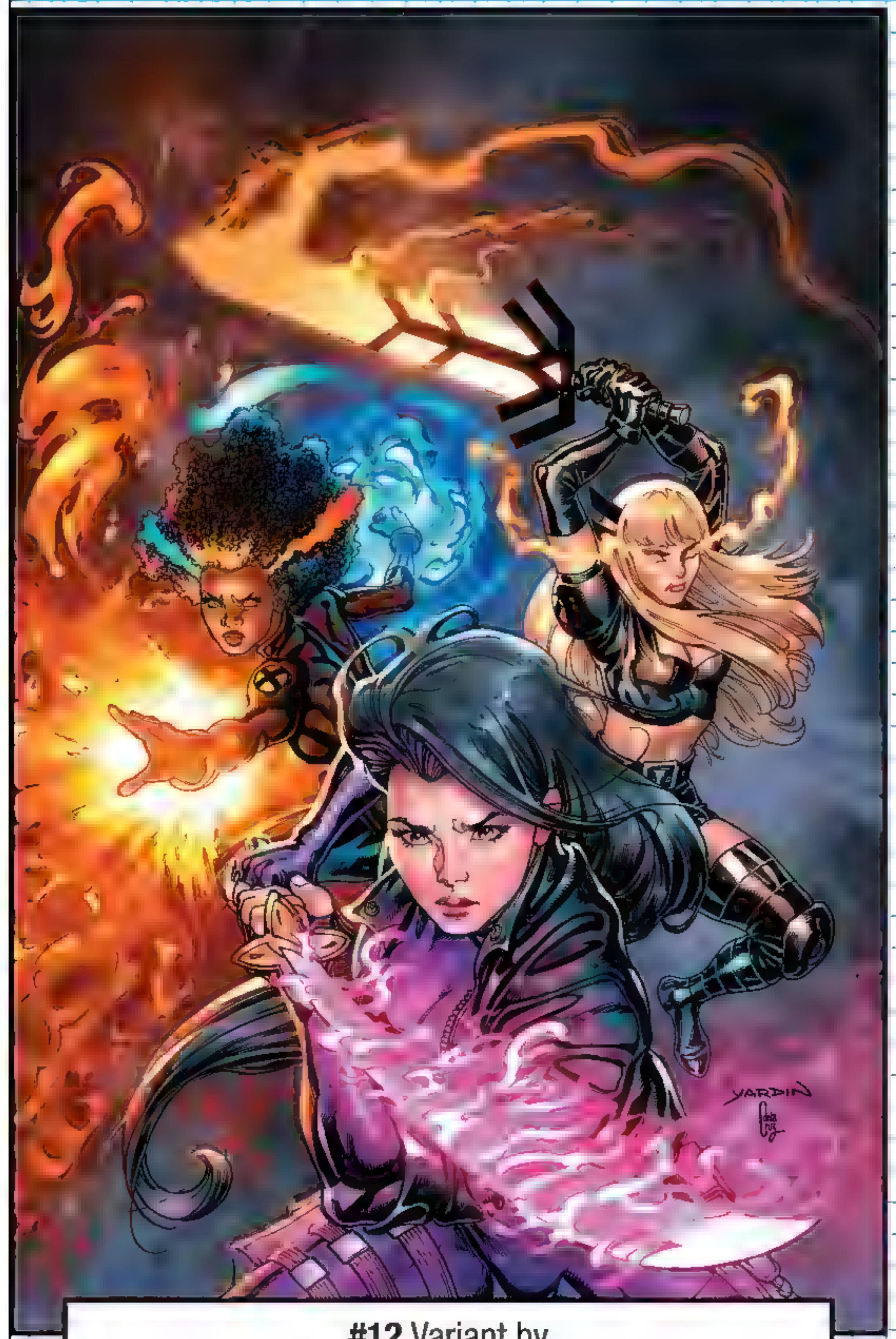

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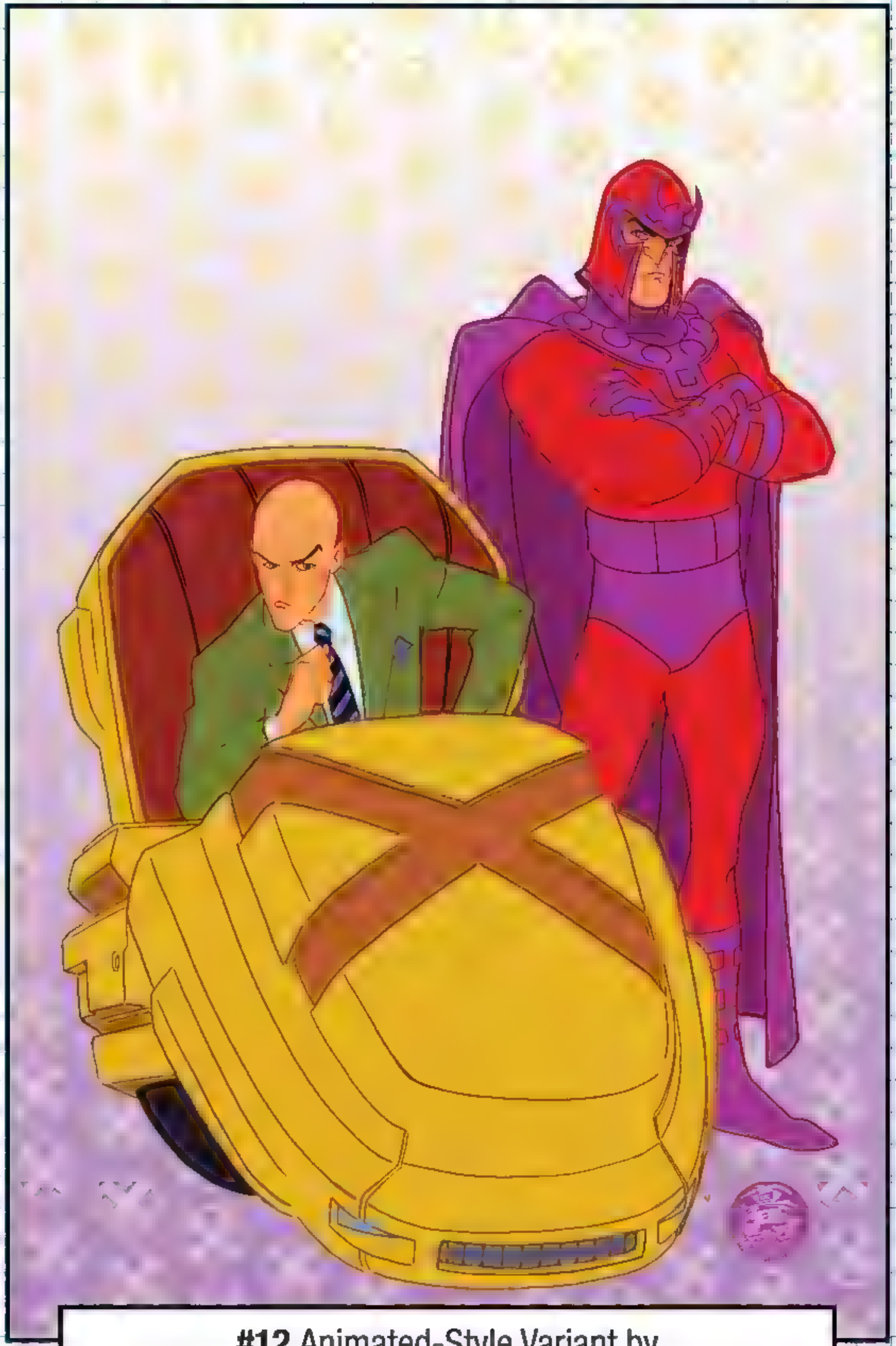

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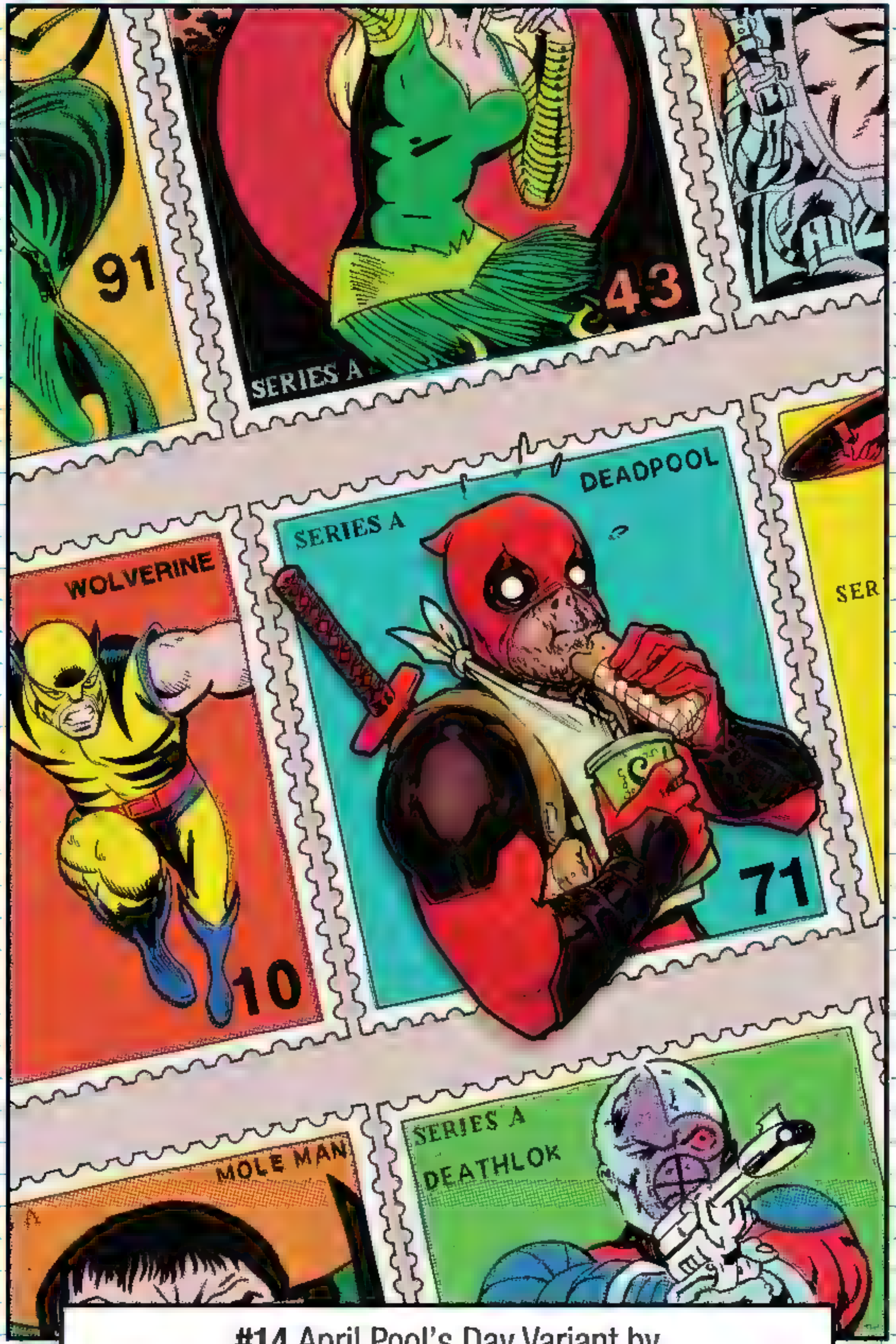
91
43
SERIES A
DEADPOOL
SERIES A
WOLVERINE
SER
71
10
MOLE MAN
SERIES A
DEATHLOK

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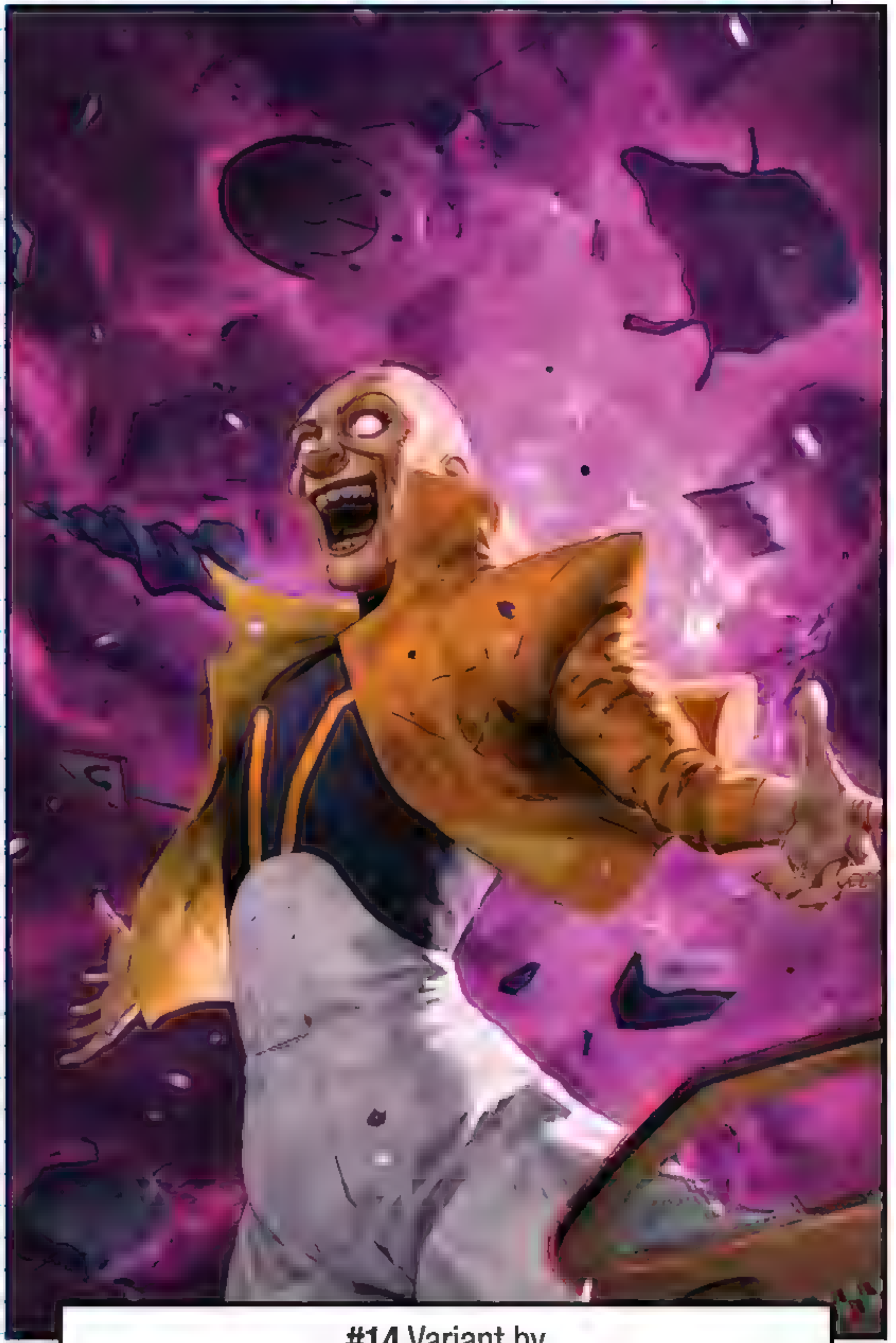

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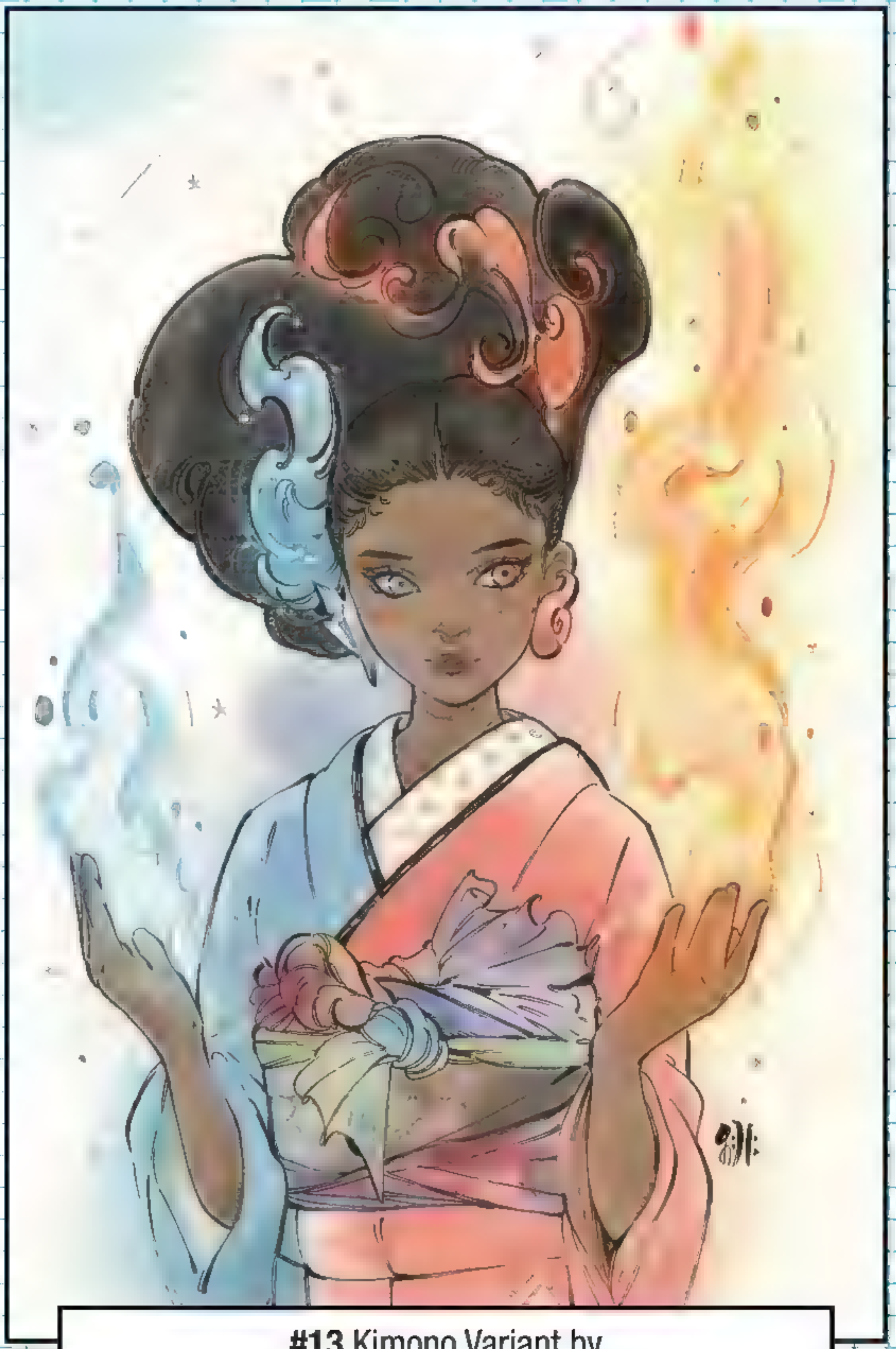

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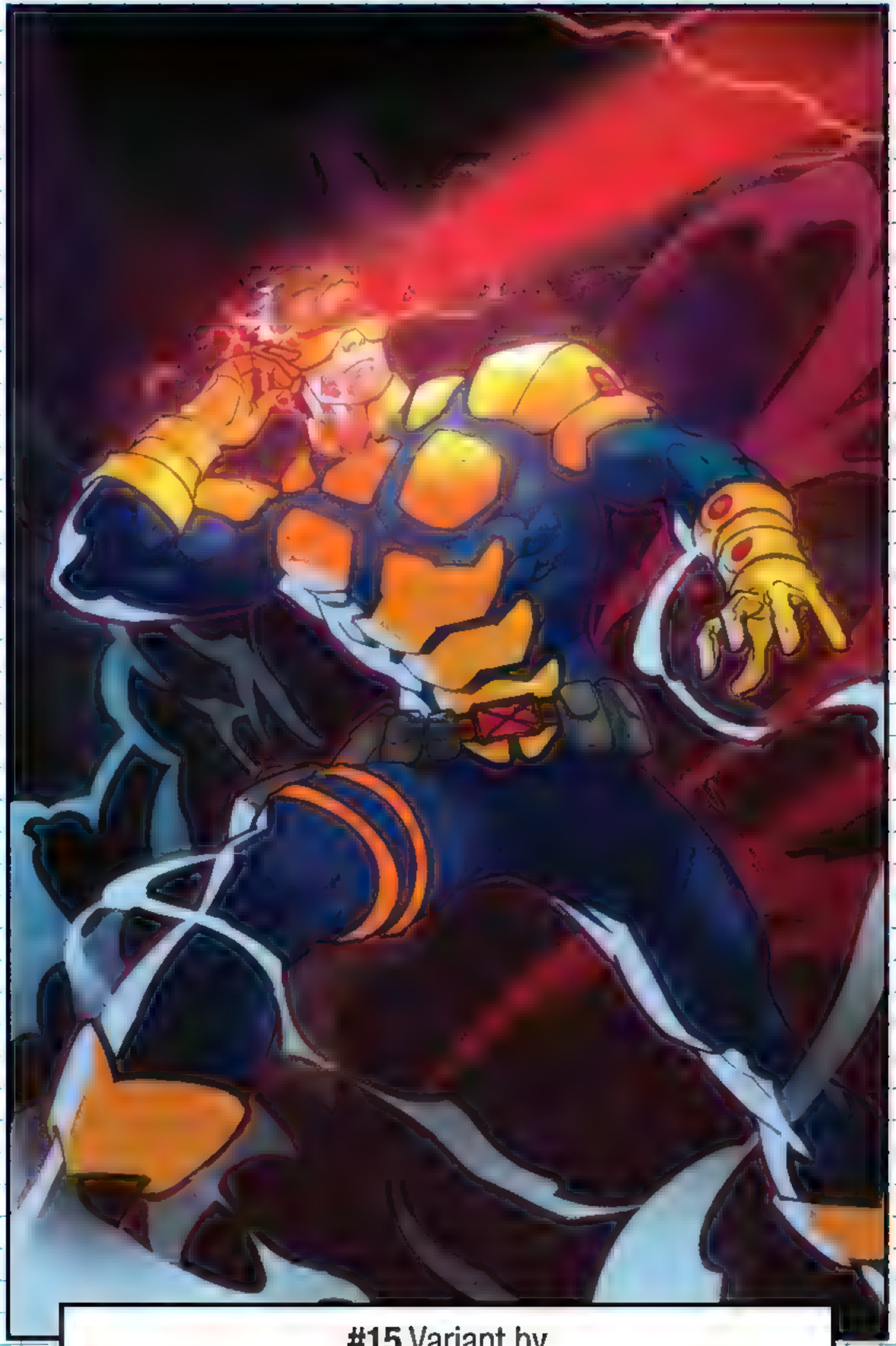

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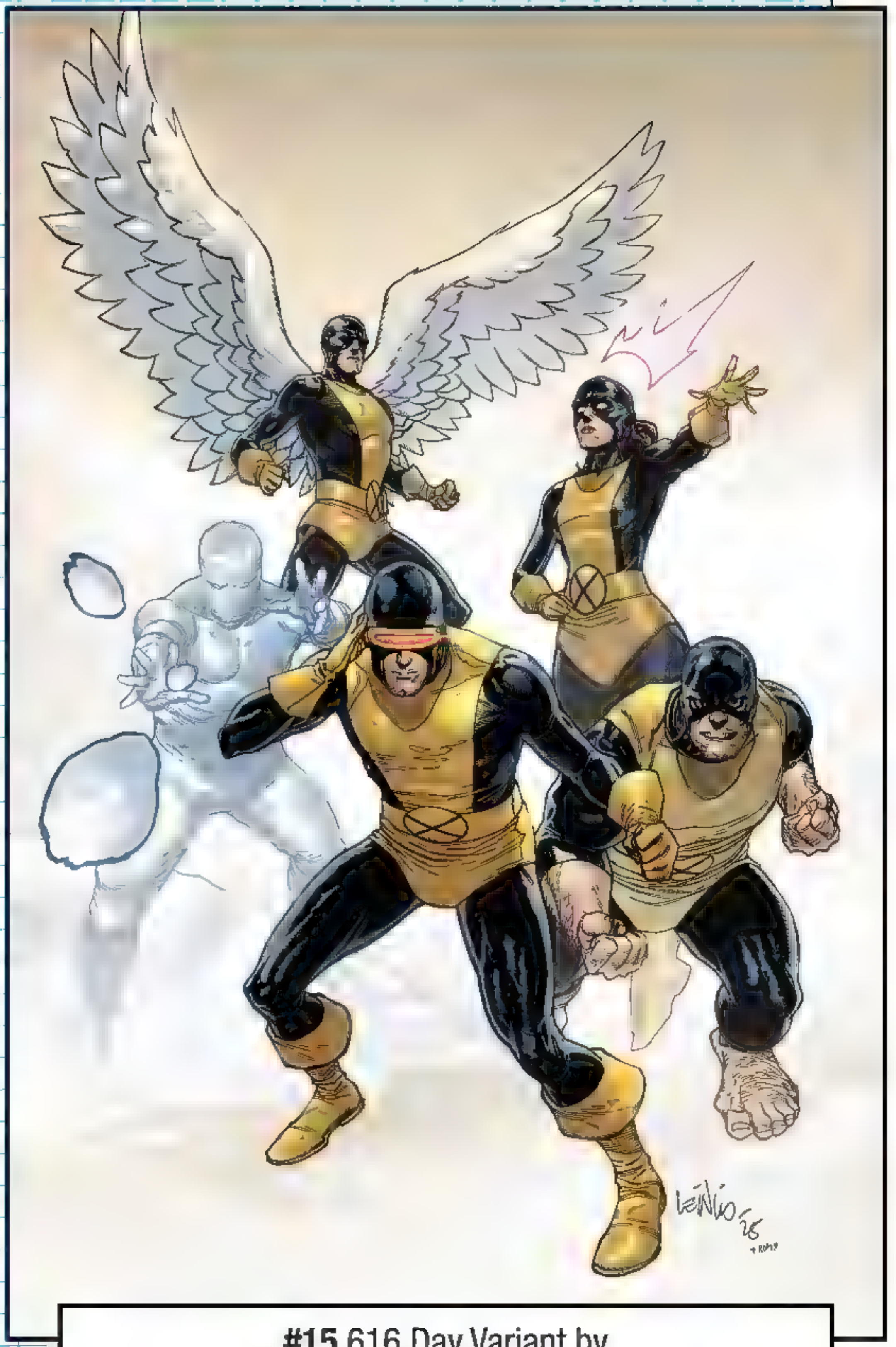

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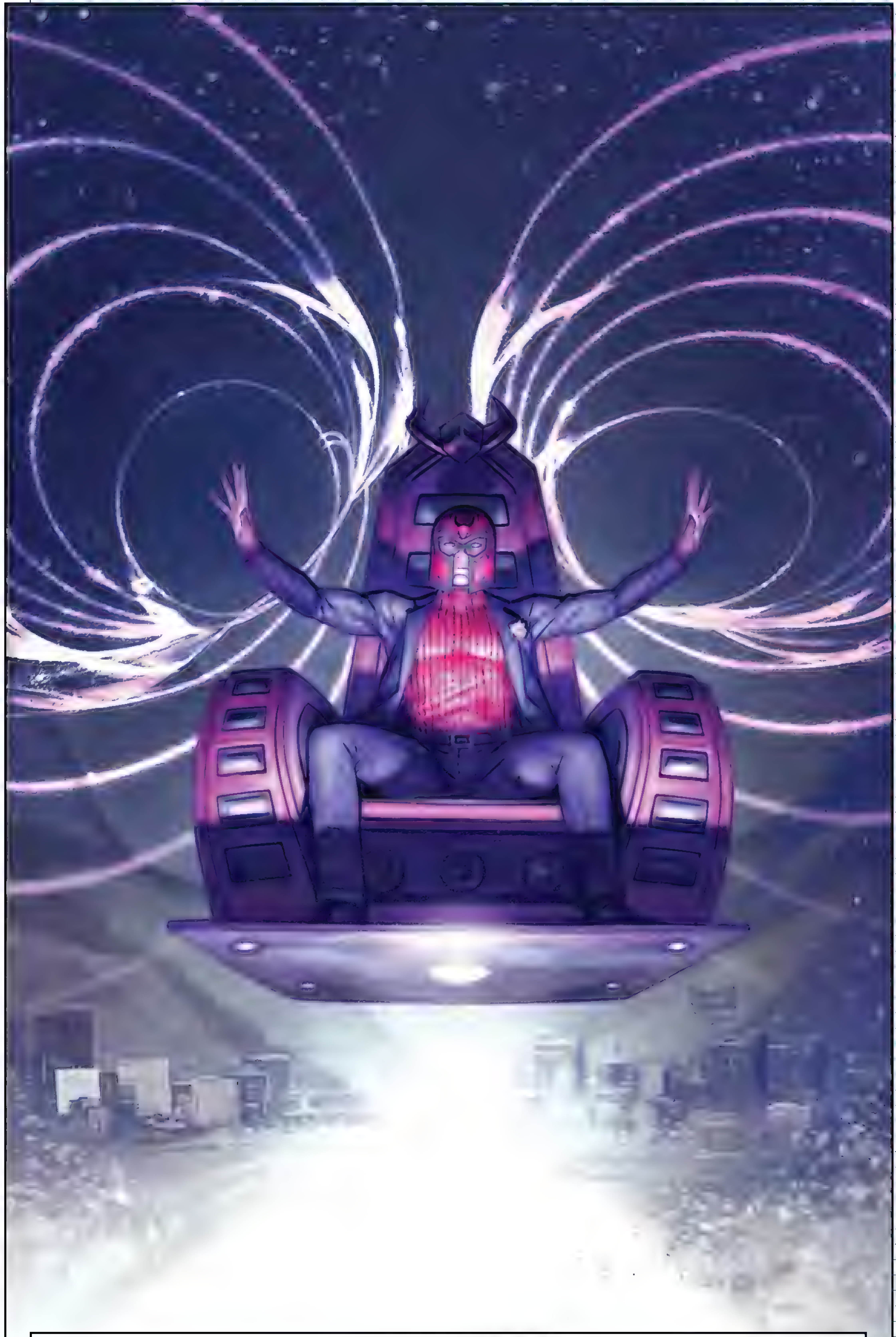

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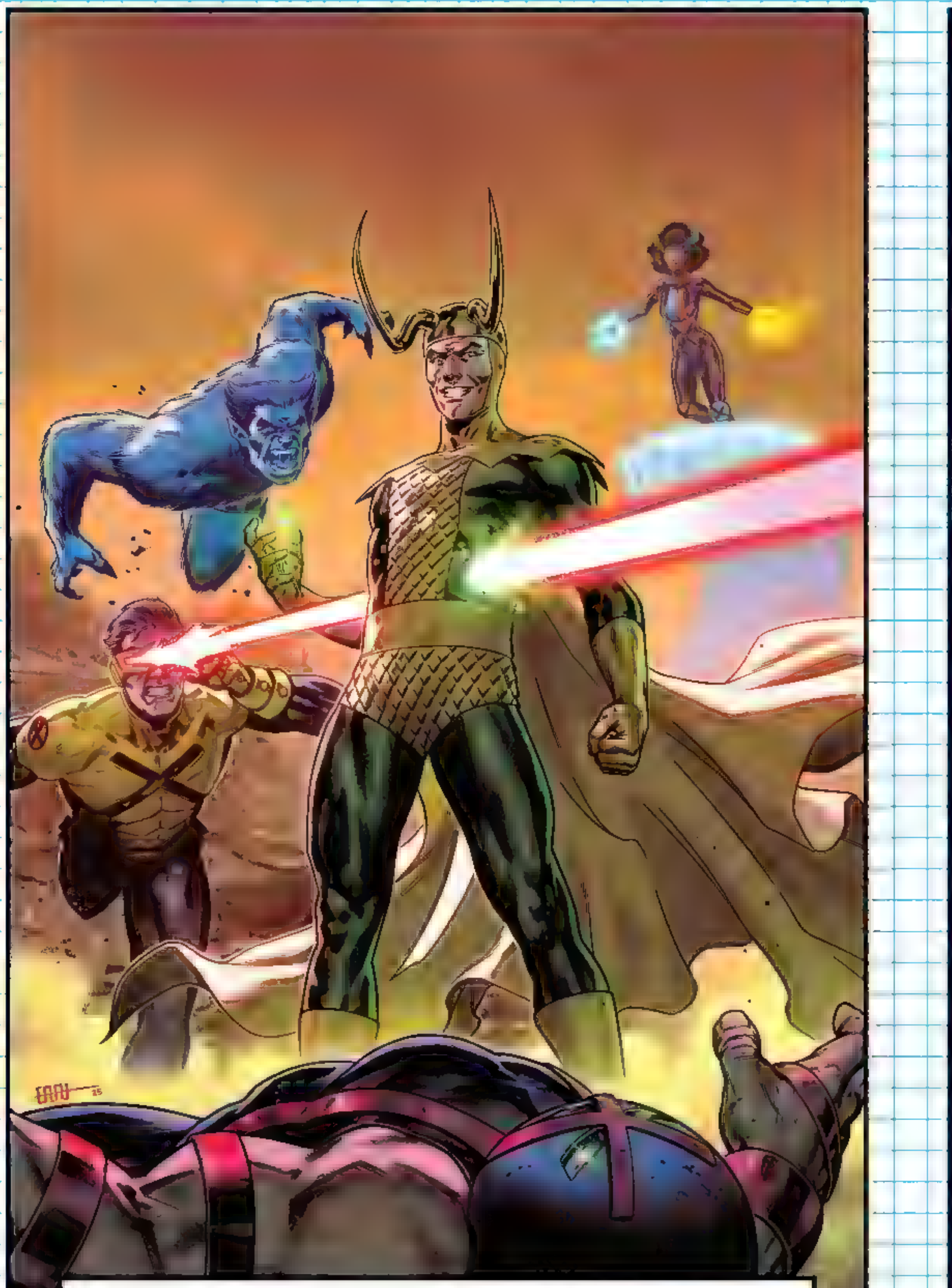

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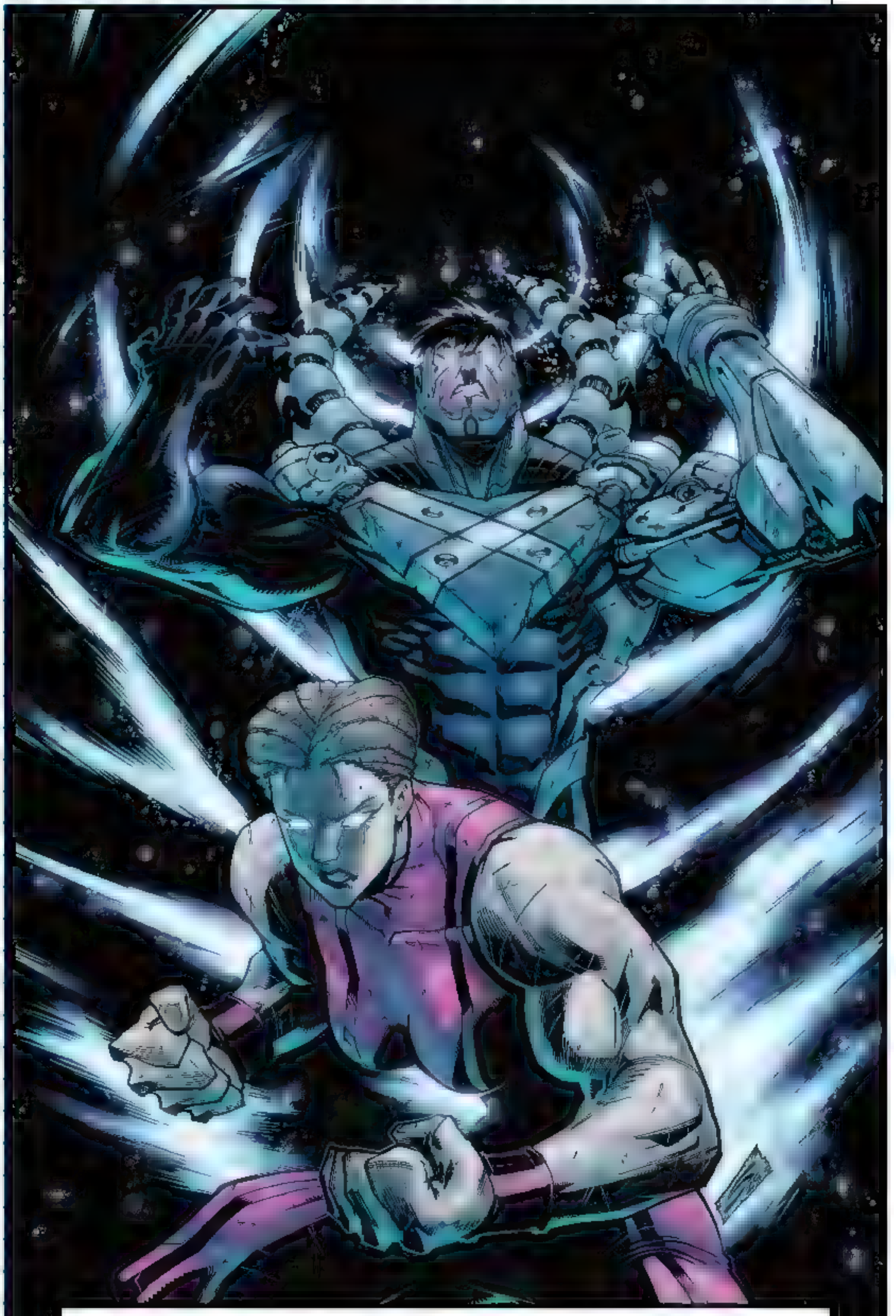

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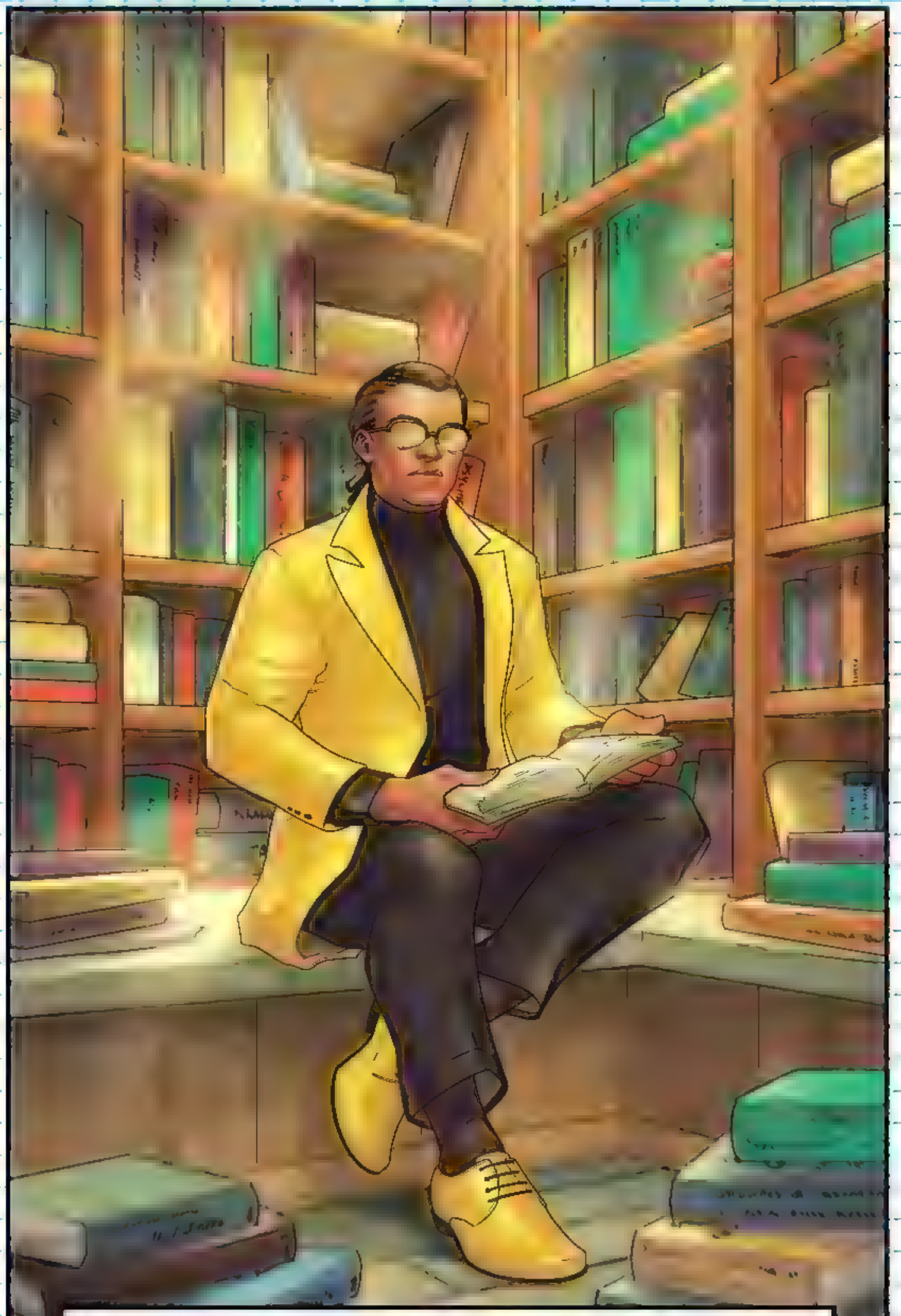

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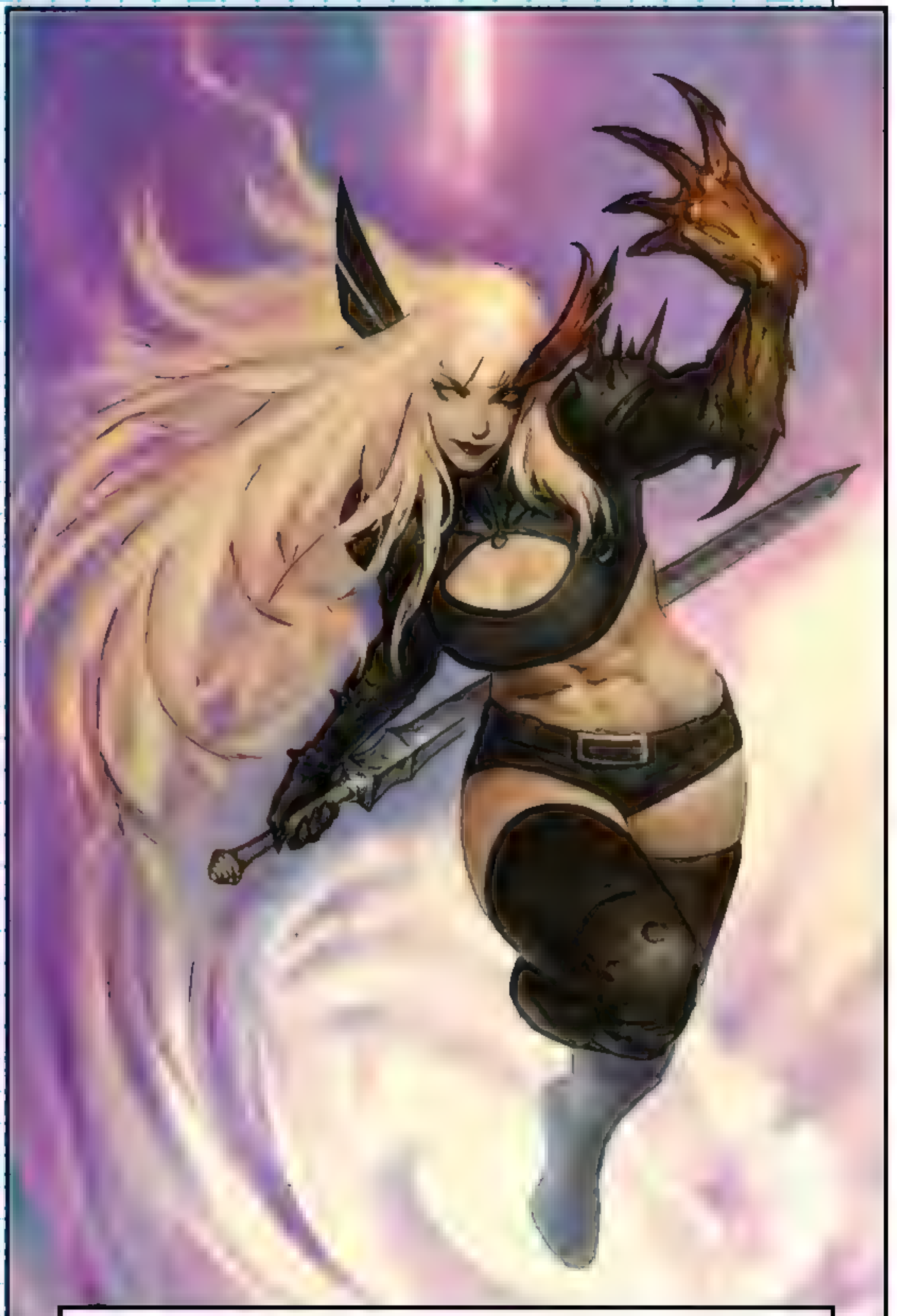

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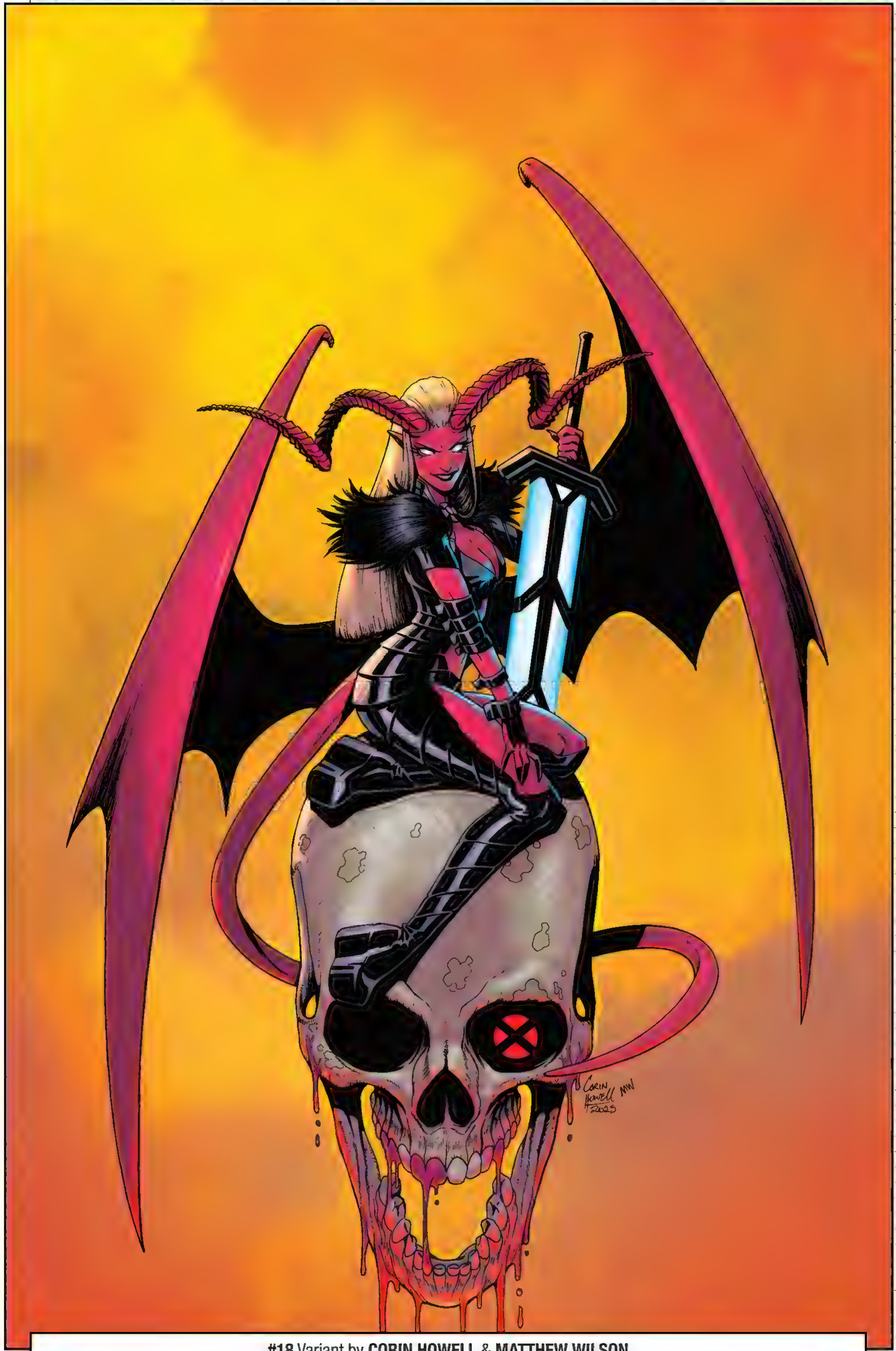

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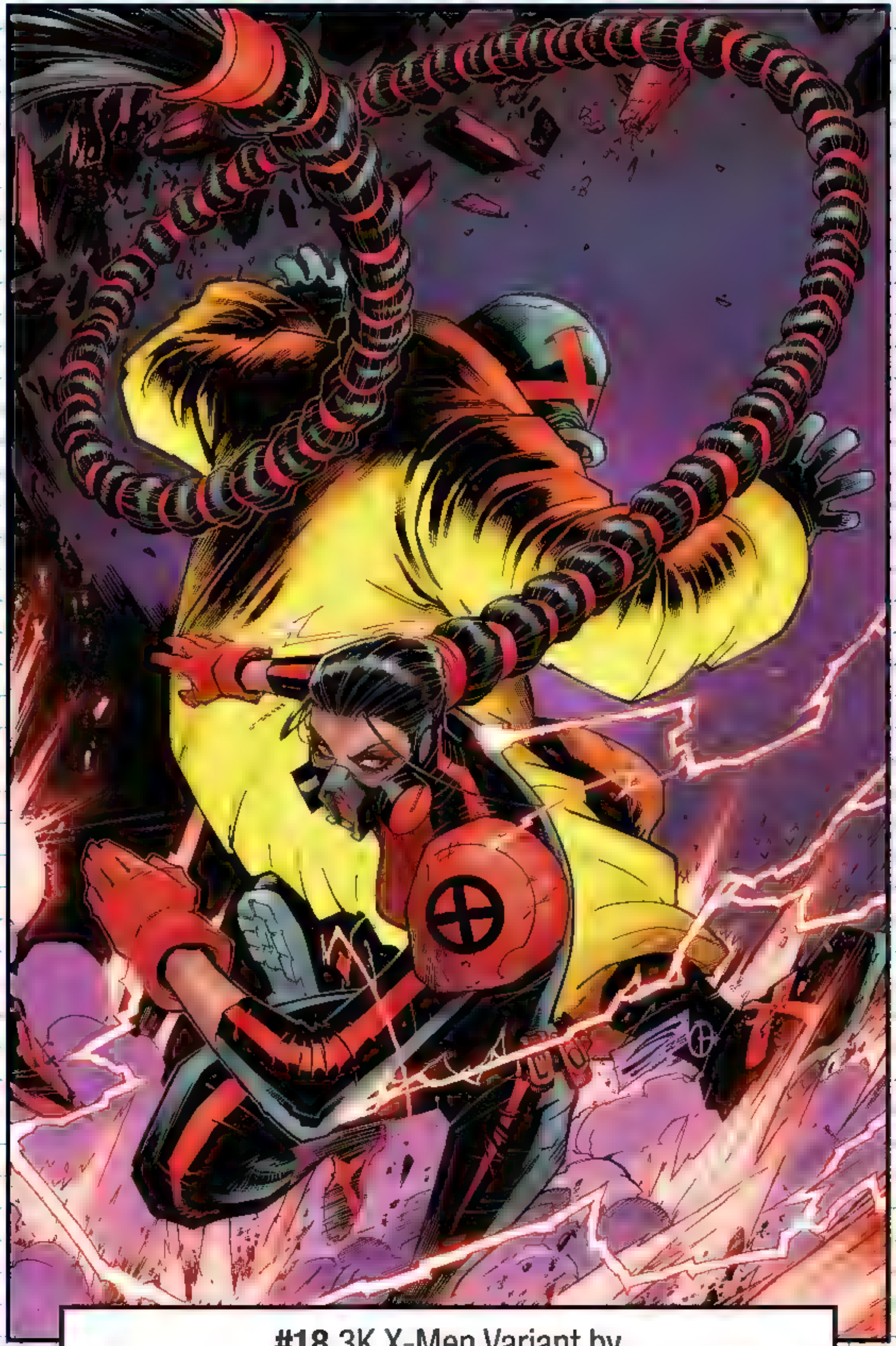

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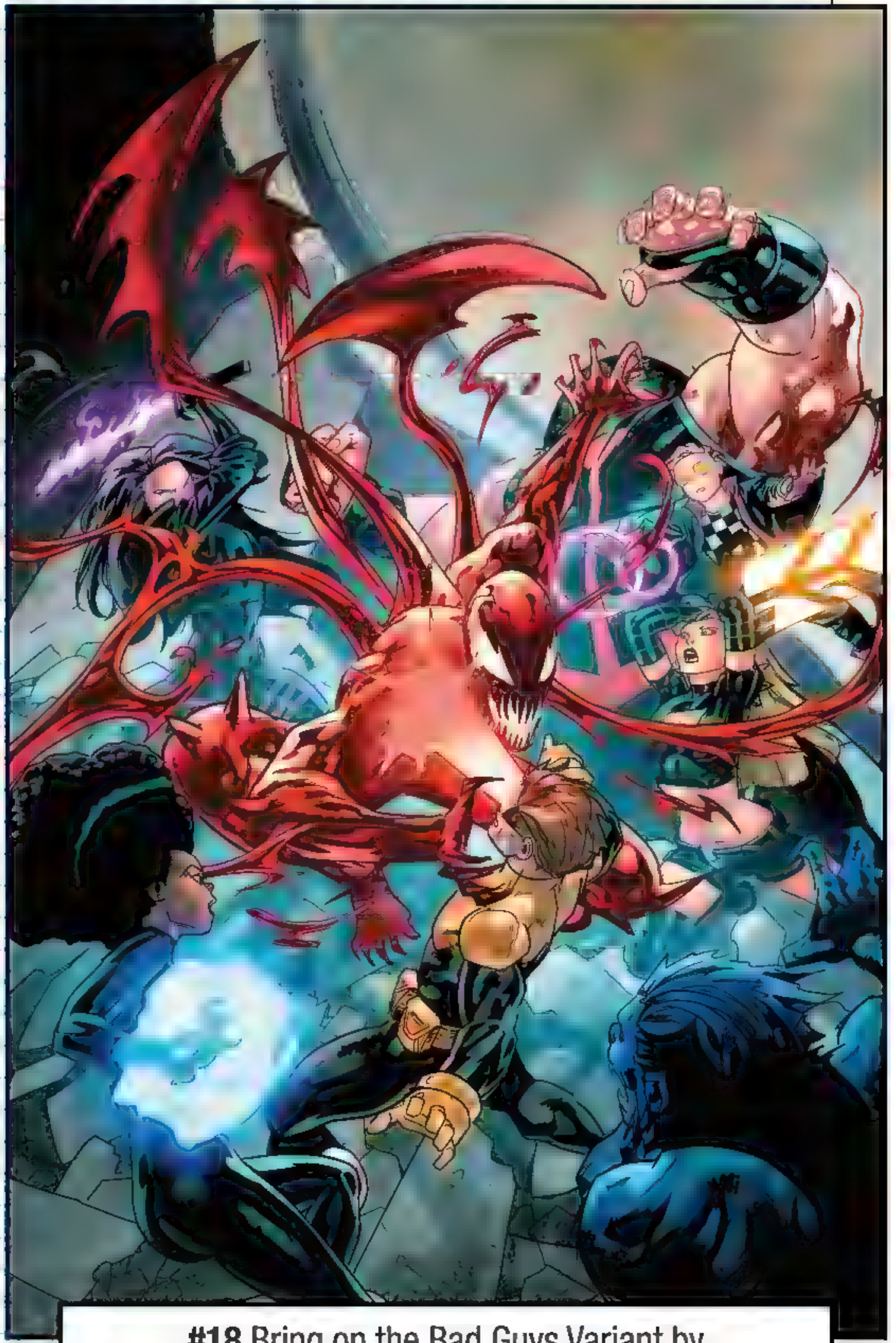

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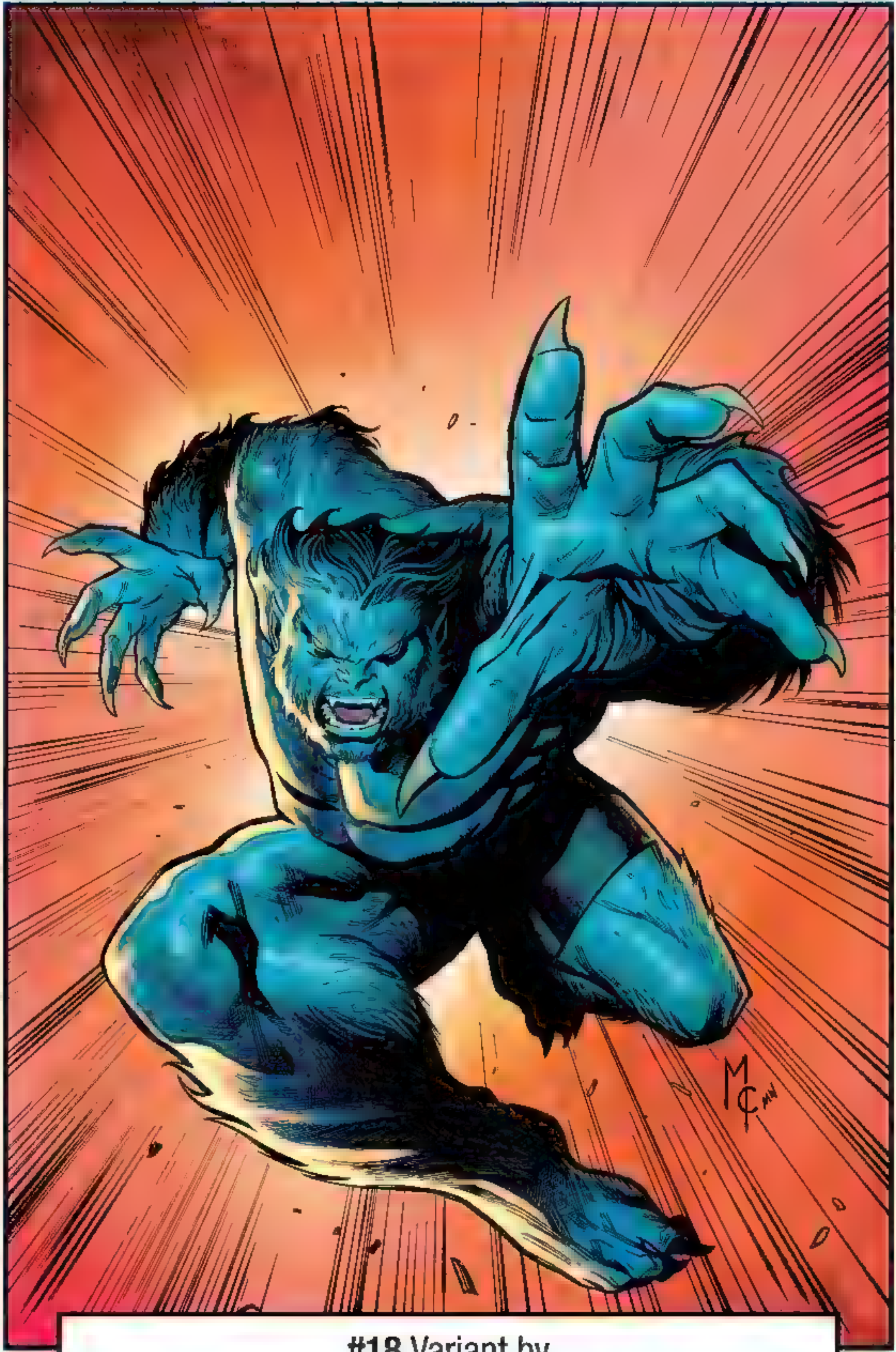

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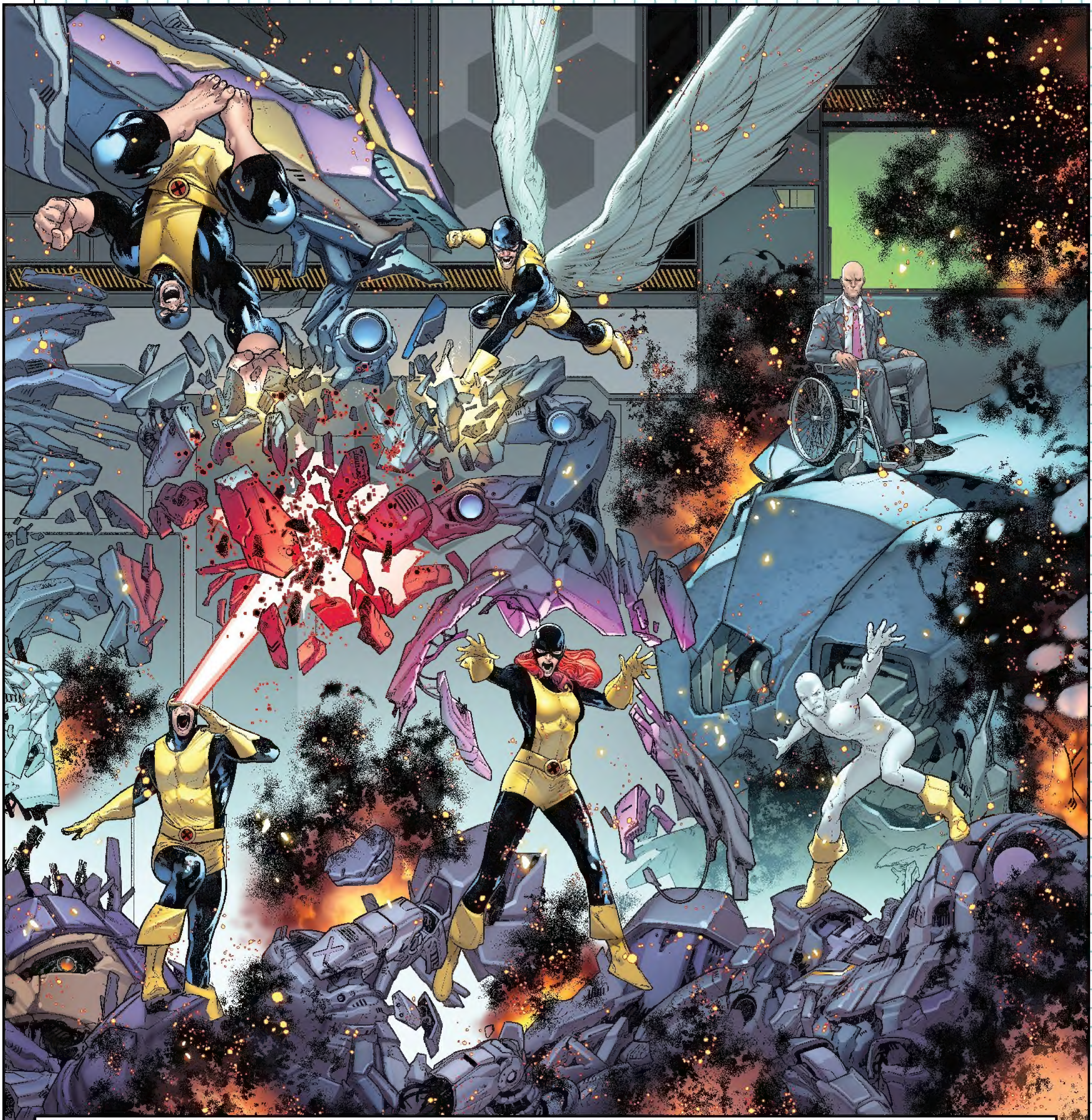

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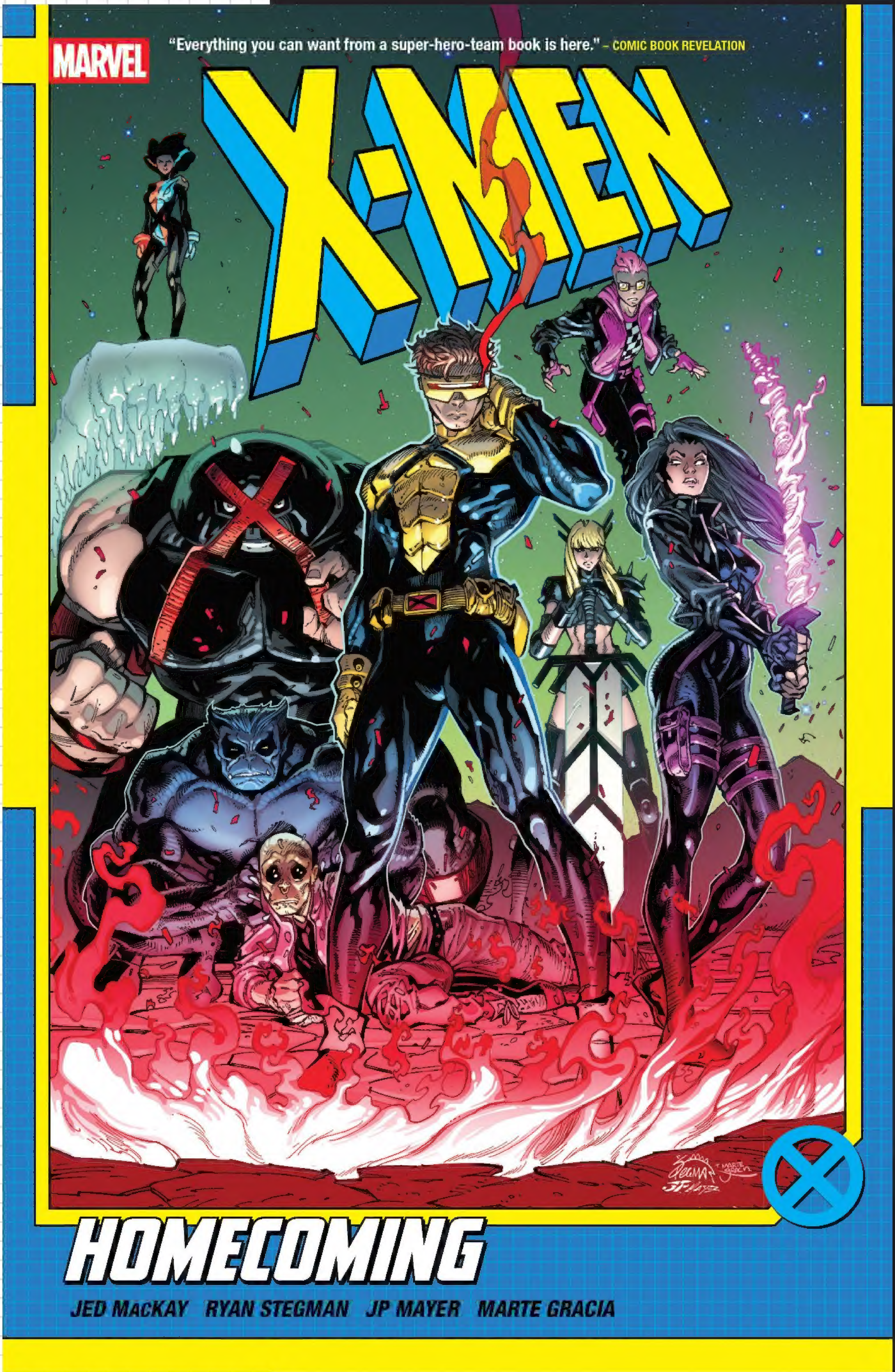
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